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ABSTRACT

A four-part radio broadcast transcript on learning from life is presented as an educational option to traditional classroom teaching. Part I discusses cities as schools for life through presentation of question-answer interviews with urban characters such as a dating service employee, founder of a man-woman institute, a community health worker and an ex-automobile salesman. Part II focuses on lessons which individuals in suburbs and planned communities have learned from life, as opposed to what they learned in school. Persons interviewed include a radio broadcaster, housewives, a professional ad writer, a professor of communications, and an architectural critic. Part III presents interviews with farmers, who identify open space, a simple life style, kinship, love of animals, and ecology as important life factors. In part IV, the announcer asks what has most influenced individuals in various walks of life. Persons interviewed include a safe cracker, artists, journalists, burlesque house hustlers, and people from rural areas. Topics discussed include farmer attitudes toward city life, making a living in the city, and the effects of television viewing on rural populations. Information on ordering the transcripts is presented and suggestions are made to teachers and parents for innovative use of the program. (Author/DB)

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"LEARNING FROM LIFE"

PART 1

PROGRAM # 68

MARCH 7, 1977

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
"CALL-IN" DATING SERVICE in Baltimore with Jackie Judd	2-4
EMILY COLEMAN, Co-Founder of the Man-Woman Institute in Sounthern California	5
SUSAN STAMBERG, Co-Host of NPR's ALL THINGS CONSIDERED	6
STEPHEN SCHWARTZ, Composer of "Pippin," "The Magic Show," and "Godspell."	7-8
More with SUSAN STAMBERG on the "how-to" books	9-12
NAOMI RICE, Community Health Worker in Harlem, NYC	13-14
NOAH ADAMS, Ex-Automobile Salesman---"The Ben Franklin Close"	14-17
WARREN FARRELL, Author of The Liberated Man	17-18
CONNIE CHANCELLOR, Executive Secretary	18-19

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LEARNING FROM LIFE

PART 1

BLAIR: This is 21st Street in Washington, D.C. I'm Wendy Blair for National Public Radio's OPTIONS IN EDUCATION. What we're going to be asking people is what they've learned just by living in a city.

MARK JOHNSON: "Don't forget to make the little one happy! They're big -- they're beautiful! The butterfly ... the beautiful balloons with love and faces to decorate. They make the ladies happy; make the children happy. Now, when you make the little ones happy, then everyone's happy! They make the ladies happy ... the butterfly -- the beautiful balloons, with love and faces to decorate. They make the ladies happy; make the children happy. When you make the little ones happy, then everyone's happy."

JOHNSON: This is the way I ran things ... that I'm selling; talk about what I'm selling, and tell what it do. And that's just about it. I do better in practically anything I sell. I went through so much in the past, well ... quite a few years, until ... yes, well ... I've learned to put up with lots of pressure and lots of aches -- or pains, or whatever it is, and hurt ... and in other words, I still enjoy life as much as I possibly can, and ...

I got messed up real bad in the army, and stayed in the hospital for several years ... after I got out ... and didn't get the treatment -- proper treatment while I was in there. As a matter of fact, my tonsils was infected so bad right after I got in there, until I ... couldn't eat anything much; hurt all the time in the chest, and even my teeth -- my gums turned blue, or black, or something -- and my teeth hollowed out. And I sure didn't get anything done for them while I was in the army!

And also, got my back injured -- they didn't call it that; put that on record, and so ... except examined back and didn't find no broken bone -- it didn't say what happened to me; a load dropped on my back on the ship, so, when I come out of there, I was all messed up. My feet bust open, my fingers bust open -- and I still couldn't get the proper medical treatment because they claim that in the army, they didn't recall what happened to me.

But, actually, I'm not bitter -- but I still think ... know that it was wrong for somebody to do that to me. In other words, I never could learn to hate -- but I figure if a person do somethin' that they really shouldn't do ... against somebody else for no reason, well, actually, something should be done about it, but since I was unable to get anything done about it, I just try, you know, to keep my own self going. I mean, in other words, I was determined that I wasn't gonna give up. That's the only way I'm still here!

JOHNSON: "The beautiful balloons -- with love and faces to decorate. They make the ladies happy; make the children happy. When you make the little ones happy, then everyone's happy."

MERROW: What is education?

BLIVEN: "Well, I should say that an educated person is one who is able to make use of the material in his mind -- in his background, over many years, and bring it into focus intelligently to apply to new problems and new conditions as they arise. Some of the wisest people I've known have had almost no education at all -- and I've known some highly educated people with lots of degrees who didn't seem to me to be wise in the least degree."

MERROW: Bruce Bliven is former editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC magazine, and that's his definition of an educated person. I'm John Merrow. In the next hour, we'd like you to meet a lot of people who have learned from experience.

"It's a very good feeling. Look ... it's wonderful to go into a supermarket, and you're sitting there buying strawberry yogurt, and you hear 'Day by Day' come over the loud speaker ..."

"But I had never experienced that. I know ... I know a lot of things, you know? But what I got to do was experience a lot of that information, rather than just get it in my head."

MERROW: These are some of the people we'd like to introduce you to as OPTIONS IN EDUCATION begins a series on "Learning from Life."

BLAIR: Cities are great schools for life. Just the way they look tells a lot. Older, smaller, ornate buildings might remind you of Europe, or of your own past. Huge, new buildings with those uniform windows can look like abstract art -- or like a computer card. Rich neighborhoods are clean; poor neighborhoods are dirty -- and if you can afford it, the city does offer you lots of choices. But, of course, the curriculum of this "school for life" depends on the people you are fortunate -- or unfortunate enough to meet.

"The Things We Do For Love" sung by The Ten CC's

MAN: "Where do we start?"

D.J.: "How about your name?"

MAN: "Okay. The name's Burt. I'm 31. I'm five foot ten, 175. I go to the University of Maryland."

D.J.: "What sort of a person are you, Burt?"

MAN: "I enjoy going out. You know, riding, camping ... love to play tennis."

"The Things We Do For Love" sung by The Ten CC's.

GIRL: "Someone to have fun with; someone who doesn't have a lot of women ... I don't want to go into that honesty bit, either."

D.J.: "Uh huh ..."

GIRL: "Just someone that's gonna show me a good time, and doesn't

have a whole lot of commitments ... you know. That's just about it."

D.J.: "Okay. Sit tight a second, Kelly. Yes sir, yes sir, are you there?"

MAN: "Yeah. I'm still here."

D.J.: "You've been trying to get through for a long time, right?"

MAN: "Right!"

D.J.: "And your name is what?"

MAN: "My name is Bobby."

D.J.: "Bobby. And you're 27?"

MAN: "Right on."

D.J.: "Uh huh. What did you think of Kelly, Bobby?"

MAN: "She's together ... you know."

D.J.: "All right. Let's check it out. Hey Kelly?"

GIRL: "Uh huh?"

D.J.: "I'd like you to meet Bobby. Speak up nice and loud, both of you, and say 'hi' to Bobby, Kelly."

GIRL: "Hi Bobby."

MAN: "How you doin' Kelly?"

GIRL: "Fine, how are you?"

MAN: "Oh, I'm hangin' in there!"

"The Things We Do For Love" sung by the Ten CC's

D.J.: "Hello, Karen -- you there?"

GIRL: "Yeah."

D.J.: "You have Augie in one, Dr. Tooth Decay in two, and Nick at 3."

GIRL: "Yeah. They all three sound interesting, you know? Augie sounds nice, but I'm not interested in anything really serious, you know?"

D.J.: "Uh huh."

GIRL: "Because I got a little bit of fun left in me, you know?"

D.J.: "Uh huh."

GIRL: "So, do you have to make a choice there, huh? Ah ... do you know - okay, what was Nick's weight, do you know?"

D.J.: "What was Nick's weight?"

GIRL: "Yeah. He didn't say."

D.J.: "All right, hang on a second. Hey, Nick?"

MAN: "Yeah?"

D.J.: "How much you weigh, man?"

MAN: "Well, I don't want to scare her off. I'm not fat, but I weigh 192."

D.J.: "And how tall are you?"

MAN: "Five - nine."

D.J. "Five - nine. Okay. Hang on. There you go. He's a big dude!"

GIRL: "Yeah. It does seem like it. He ought to play football well."

D.J.: "Uh huh."

GIRL: "Uh ... gee. I think I would like to talk to Dr. Tooth Decay there."

D.J.: "Okay. We'll find him momentarily. Hang on, Karen. Hang on, Dr. Tooth. Augie and Nick -- thanks a lot for calling. Karen, say 'hi' to Dr. Tooth Decay."

GIRL: "Hi!"

MAN: "Hi Karen!"

"The Things We Do For Love" sung by the Ten CC's

MERROW: You can go to college, and learn to be a scholar; you can go to a vocational school and learn a specialized skill. But where can you go to learn how to meet people? Well, there's that Baltimore radio show; there's computer dating -- or the more trendy video-dating. But Emily Coleman and Keith Tolburn feel there's another way to practice this social skill -- and they formed The Man-Woman Institute in Southern California.

COLEMAN: You know, in our society, the women walk along the street, and the men kind of stand by and then they look at the women. Okay. We

reversed this process. We have the women sit around the room, and the men walk -- and the women look at them. The men now walk around the room with this in mind; that they are going to try to make friendly overtures toward the women that they would like as partners later. This is what women have been taught that they must do -- you know, with their eyes, or their body movements, or something, to let a man know, "Hey -- I kind of like you." Okay. So we go through that, and we also emphasize at that time that people pay attention to how they feel.

Are you the kind of a person, if you're the man, that makes overtures simply to one woman, because that's all ... the only woman that you want to pick you -- are you the kind of man that makes overtures to all of the women so that you'll play it safe? Or ... and what do you ... how do you feel like when you make overtures toward one woman, and another woman is sitting right alongside of her -- do you then make overtures toward her? Or do you think that you can make gradations in overtures; can you make the best overtures to one person, and second and third to the others -- do you think that people understand that? You know? All of those things come up.

Then, after we've gone through that process, the women are going to go across the room, and they are going to non-verbally select a partner. What the man gets to do, he gets to go along with -- or to refuse. But it's the woman that is doing the selecting. And then we go into the idea to these women, "Are you able to reach out to somebody that has not made friendly overtures to you? What happens when you make overtures ... or you go after the same person that another person goes after? Who do you give into and who do you not -- and what do you do to get your man? Do you back right away, or do you grab him, and do you have a fight with the other woman, or do you plead, or ..." -- and this all has to be non-verbal, so that people become very much aware of the sentences that are going on in their minds that encourage them to reach out, and that keep them from reaching out and selecting.

And what happens is that this little process, many times, it's a person's whole life enacted out in miniature ... because our life has a lot to do with choosing and being chosen, and what stands in our way of choosing and being chosen -- on many, many levels.

MERROW: Let's assume you're single. You go to The Man-Woman Institute, attend a few weekend workshops, and even sit in on the six week course on "How To Make Friends With The Opposite Sex." Getting in was easy -- but getting out will be difficult.

COLEMAN: Everything about our culture encourages us to get into relationships -- to get into them, and to hang on to them forever, because that's the way we were brought up. I think that we really almost need a society to help people get out of relationships -- to have them have parties and showers for people who are getting divorces, to celebrate this marvelous thing, and to realize that the ending of something -- something has to end before something else can begin, and so to carry on life and liveliness, relationships have to end, and something else has to begin.

MERROW: The Man-Woman Institute in California doesn't give out degrees -- but its directors believe it teaches a lot more about meeting people than

our schools do. That report was prepared by Marcy Winograd in Pasadena, California.

"Song For Sharon" sung by Joni Mitchell

TALBOT: "Susan Stamberg, have you ever been to a palmist?"

STAMBERG: "I went to one in India. Actually, there are millions of palmists in India, and I went to several -- but one was a sort of friend of ours; a guy that ran an art gallery, and knew me in a way, and he told me that he did palm reading. I said, 'Well, come on!' -- shoved a hand in front of him. He took a look at it, turned pale white -- looked terrified, frightened, surprised -- looked up at me, looked back at my palm, looked up at me, looked back at my palm, said, 'Hmm ... oh ... well, let's not do this!' I ... imagine what he saw! That really scared me a lot. I think of it from time to time."

TALBOT: "How's your health?"

STAMBERG: "Pretty good. One thing he said, though -- he said, 'You will be divorced by the time you're 48.' At that point, I was 26 or so, and I said to him, 'Well, that's no fun. I don't want to be divorced, but if I'm gonna be, I don't want it to happen at 48 -- I'll be too old to enjoy the freedom -- what's the point?'

TALBOT: "Good luck ... you'll need it!"

STAMBERG: "Thank you!"

MERROW: More on what NPR's Susan Stamberg has learned coming up in a few minutes, as OPTIONS IN EDUCATION continues its series on "Learning from Life."

BLAIR: We've walked a few blocks now, and in certain neighborhoods in any city, a familiar neon sign -- this one says "Horoscope readings, card readings, reader-advisor." Sister Fay, or Sister Alice with love potions, amulets, astrology -- it's the fortune teller store.

BLAIR: "Something that I noticed when you read my palm -- you didn't ask anything of me. All I had to do was sit here, relax, and give you my palms faced towards you. I didn't have to tell you anything ..."

READER: "I don't need to ask questions, because I have your palms in front of me, and I can see what I want to see."

BLAIR: "You're feeling my hands at the same time, in yours. Do you feel that people come to you because they believe -- or they hope -- in a kind of magic, or a superstition?"

READER: "I can only tell you they come in and they feel better -- by sometime talking about their problems. I really couldn't tell

you if they believe in magic or not."

BLAIR: "What you're saying is that it's not magic at all."

READER: "No, no -- I said that they ... I couldn't say that they believed in magic."

BLAIR: "Tell me how you got into this. How did you find that you had a gift for doing this work?"

READER: "I did not find. It is something that goes through generations. You must be born with it, and I don't believe that you can learn from books and people teaching. You know ... you see ... you know -- rather than you've been taught to know. There is a difference."

SCHWARTZ: "I like magic a lot. It has to do with ... well, now you're getting into all complicated things with me and my emotional hangups or whatever. It has to do with just always wanting more, I think, and wanting things to somehow be more than they are. I remember when I was in high school, I used to listen to the eleven o'clock news every night, desperately hoping that people from another planet had landed. I really specifically remember thinking, 'Maybe tonight, I'll turn on the news, and there'll be people from another planet here, and it'll be like ... very different, or ... I don't know ... I always wanted something miraculous to be going on."

"The Magic Show ..."

MERROW: Artists of all kinds come to the city to find magic, and one kind of artist -- a songwriter -- needs a big city; a Broadway to sell his wares. Stephen Schwartz is only 28, and his success is magic. "Godspell", "Pippin", and "The Magic Show" are all still running. Schwartz spoke with Jay Kernis.

SCHWARTZ: It's a learning process, and you look at things, and then you get away from them, and you say, "Oh, I see. Yeah, well, I did that there, and that wasn't such a wise choice." You know, I had a thing that I was trying to do in "The Magic Show", which was to make all the songs tricks -- and -- so they're very nifty, and there is a lot of clever rhyming, and there's a lot of nifty counterpoint, and they're all in strange rhythms; they're in sevens and elevens, and things like that. And what happened was you put it all on the stage, and one got a very cold feeling from the score ... there was ... except for "Lion Tamer" and "West End" a little bit, there was very little emotion -- and I think that was a mistake, you know? I think if I could go back in time and start again on the show, I would make different choices; I wouldn't do all the songs quite as tricky -- in fact, we're doing a London production of the show this Spring, and I'm gonna do some new songs for it.

"Lion Tamer" from THE MAGIC SHOW on Broadway

SCHWARTZ: Each time I do a show, and then I get away from it for about a year, and I look back at it, I see so many things that I just say, "Oh, well, no, that wasn't really good enough here, Stephen."

KERNIS: What song are you proud of?

SCHWARTZ: I'm very proud of "Lion Tamer" -- I like that song a lot. I like "Love Song" in "Pippin" very much. What I did was I went back to an old affair, and I just got back into that, and thought about it, and I said, "Well, I'll write about that." And that was a key thing for me when that happened, because what happened was the song got down somewhere very deep into some ... into personal feelings, and somehow I think that came across.

"Love Song" from "Pippin"

SCHWARTZ: Doing that for the first time, it was like a light went on, and I said, "Oh yeah, well, I could do this -- writing songs for shows. I could still ..." -- it's method writing; it's like using the Stanislavski acting method - in your writing, you go back to your own experience. It's all getting to be less painful, and more painful, at the same time. It's very strange. You see, I think I always write about the same thing, which is compromise -- and the fact that life never quite lives up to one's hopes for it, or expectations -- and yet, we have to find a way of dealing with that. And so, I think the thing that ... the thing that's closest to me in my feelings is the finale -- the thing that he sings; not the thing that they sing about "Think About Your Life" - "I wanted magic shows and miracles, and I wanted such a little thing; I wanted so much" -- and that whole thing.

Finale from "Pippin"

MERROW: Stephen Schwartz, who wrote musical scores for "Godspell", "Pippin" and "The Magic Show" -- talking with Jay Kernis.

BLAIR: This is a combination record and book store. Earlier, we said that everybody you meet in life is a teacher -- and that's true, but just in case you haven't run across anybody yet who has the answers for you, you can come to a bookstore like this one. Non-fiction, "how-to" books are the biggest sellers. Here's one ... "A Complete Guide to Birddog Training" and "Yoga, Tantra and Meditation" -- "T.A. For Teens -- And Other Important People." Books for inner development; there is "Growing Old and Staying Young"; "Making It From 40 to 50"; "Open Marriage"; "How To Overcome Depression" -- hey, here's one! "How To Do Your Income Tax!" Hmm ... "Saviera's Super Sex -- Her Personal Techniques for Total Love-making" -- how about that? Uh oh ... censored! The income tax one is by Mary Hartman's father -- J.K. Lasser. "The Skateboarder's Bible" ... free style tally sheet ... the well-dressed skateboarder; helmut, elbow pads, gloves, knee pads and sneakers. I think this is a little young for me! This is for me -- "It's Up To You -- Developing Assertive Social Skills." Checklist. "If you are not having enjoyable conversations, perhaps you expect your conversations to be enjoyable without any effort on your part. Perhaps you do not listen to what others say." That's not me. "Perhaps you engage in too much negative talk." Well ...

The trouble is that the people who would read this are already sort

of ... they know something's wrong. But the real bad people don't know anything's wrong; they think they're perfect. They would never come to a bookstore like this. "Stumbling blocks to successful social contacts are -- not liking to go out alone, not knowing how to act, or what to do, being too busy, being too lazy ..." This is for really somebody who's got a lot of problems. Not me!

MERROW: Susan Stamberg is the co-host of National Public Radio's ALL THINGS CONSIDERED. And part of her job is interviewing authors. She spoke with Keith Talbot.

TALBOT: Susan, you have all of these people coming in and out of your life with their "how-to" books. I'm tempted to say "peddling" their "how-to" books. These people come in and out of your life ... so what do you get from it?

STAMBERG: Yeah. I have a feeling that you learn to the extent that you need to learn something -- and that a book, a "how-to" book -- is only as good as you need to know that particular "how-to." It'll speak to you, because you have to know it.

TALBOT: I'm thinking ... a sociologist once said to me that people are interested in whatever is a problem to them.

STAMBERG: I think that's right, and it's probably self-revealing to tell you that -- I guess in this whole collection of tape -- the thing that changed my life was the piece of information that's become a part of my kind of intellectual baggage that I carry around -- is something Eda LaShane said, a wonderful family counselor, and a child psychologist. She said, "When your child ..." -- I have a son -- "makes you most angry; when you're most angry, stop and ask yourself what it is that that child is doing that's reminding you of something that happened in your own childhood."

And that, you know, that really just opened a million doors to me, and it's changed, really, my behavior as a mother; my behavior as a wife, because it's not just that kind of interaction with children -- it's that kind of interaction with anybody that gets you really angry, and it's just a cue to you; "Hey, wait a minute. What's going on here? Really. What kinds of things inside me are being stirred up?"

STAMBERG: "Something occurred to me -- maybe the best things I've ever learned about children are what I've learned about myself as a child. And you talk about how parents are almost paranoid, and how they run from one formula book to the other. Every year, new books come out. More and more of them ... deluged by them ..."

ADELAIDE BRIE: "It comes of terror and guilt -- of, you know, having been brainwashed to believe that there's some magical formula by which you could do it right."

STAMBERG: "And there's some expert on the outside who's gonna tell you the formula."

BRIE: "That's right. That's right. And the expert is really on the inside, but I think if one is gonna do a decent job as a parent, one has to constantly be in touch with that sense of, 'How did I feel about myself as a child?' and 'Am I reading things into my child's behavior? Or am I doing the same thing all over again?' I think the important distinction for parents who get in touch with us and have some sensitivity to it, is to say to a child ... to make the distinction between being bad and being young."

STAMBERG: "Yes!"

BRIE: "... that a child is selfish, or as a child is afraid, or a child ..."

STAMBERG: She was right there at that time, you know -- the time was right; the person was right -- the situation was right ... for me to hear it, and I think that's the point about all of these books. You know, they're as useful as your need to know ... to know what they're about.

TALBOT: Do you think listeners really benefit from any of these interviews?

STAMBERG: Yeah ... I guess they benefit to the extent, again, that their antennae are out to need that kind of information. For instance, I think about a listener who wrote to us; a man named Judah Graubart from Des Plaines, Illinois, who told us that his life was deeply influenced by 2 books that he read. One was called "What Color Is Your Parachute?" -- terrific title! And the other one was "Go Hire Yourself An Employer." Those two books, and some other things ... and maybe some free thinking on his part made him take stock of his life, kind of, and reassess where he was going, and what he decided was he didn't like very much where he was going -- he was working too hard, he was commuting all the time, he was being all the things that everybody else seems like ...

GRAUBERT: "My ... I guess my mother was the most tolerant. She said, 'Well' -- you know -- 'if that's what you really want to do, who am I to say no?' ... but, like ... you know, 'My son -- he's crazy.'"

STAMBERG: "Right. But your father, the Rabbi, I'm sure, didn't find it such an easy ..."

GRAUBERT: "My father ... the Rabbi ... he found it very difficult, you know, like, 'You're giving all this up. Look at all you've achieved. Look at all you're contributing. What are you gonna do with yourself?' -- that kind of thing. My friends ... well, I remember one fellow with whom I was fairly close, at work, said to me, 'Well, Graubert, what are you gonna do now -- go off and sit on the side of a mountain and contemplate?' -- this kind of thing."

STRAMBERG: "Hmm. Sure ... sure. Because you're rocking everybody's boat by doing that."

GRAUBERT: "Right! Right ... exactly, yes ..."

STAMBERG: "Then why did you feel it was so important to share that

message with us? What are the lessons for the rest of us -- those of us who may be listening to you and feel that we, too, are leading these lives of quiet desperation? What can we learn from you?"

GRAUBERT: "Well, I think, first of all, it's terribly, terribly important that people do learn that they don't have to spend their lives being prisoners in this self-made kind of job role or sex role confinement."

STAMBERG: "When I called you, you said, 'Hold on a minute. I'm baking bread, and I have to turn off the oven.' What else do you do now?"

GRAUBERT: "I'm spending a great deal of my time now in the work that I really have decided upon myself for my ..."

TALBOT: But aren't all of these things common sense? I mean, shouldn't we just ... many of us feel that we should just sort of know these things intuitively somehow?

STAMBERG: Yeah, that's right -- and we get a lot of response from listeners who make just that point. "Spare us from all of these advice-givers. Keep your ..." -- you know -- "self-counselors to yourself; we don't need to hear that." But again, you know, it gets back to that basic point of -- if you need to hear them, they're there; if you don't, maybe you're darn lucky, or maybe you're denying a whole lot of stuff that's going on in your life -- it's hard to know that.

TALBOT: Books on getting a job are very big, and what else? Love relationships ...

STAMBERG: I think it's really the relationships that are the big thing in these days. Tom Wolfe talks about the "me decade," and I think we're on a binge, kind of, with that.

TALBOT: Are you a part of the "me decade" -- are you a part of that?

STAMBERG: I don't know. I'm self-conscious to be asked, and I'm self-conscious to talk about it. Probably I am, but it feels wrong to me. I'm 38 years old, and I should have done that when I was 17. I did it when I was 17, you know, and I'm doing it again in different ways now at this later age, so sure -- I guess I am a part of it. But what I started to say, though, was that there's ... I think there's some kind of a cue to all of us when things become tremendously popular at a given time. And if books like this are becoming popular, it means that they are speaking to a deep need that an awful lot of people are feeling. They're looking around them; maybe they're seeing ... they've reached a certain point in life where they've gotten what they've wanted, they've achieved a whole lot of goals, maybe, that they wanted -- or they're close to getting them, or they're very far from getting them, and maybe things still feel empty. There's no real satisfaction at the end. So you start wondering why, and you start exploring for that reason.

I think maybe as a country, we're there, you know -- and as individuals within this country, that's where we are, too. And that's the reason we turn ... you know, we go to the bookstores and we look on the shelves and figure out, "Hey, how come it doesn't taste good?"

TALBOT: That's what Diana Christianson in the film, "Network", said -- she said that her goal -- her programming goal was to articulate the popular rage, which became "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not gonna take it any more."

STAMBERG: Yeah. She wasn't anybody I respected terribly much because she was such a manipulator, and so cold -- but yes, that's right -- articulating ...

TALBOT: Cashing in on that ...

STAMBERG: Yeah. And that's an art, really, to be able to do it. But you're left very often articulating the popular rage with an empty bag. This bothers me a lot with books like Adelaide Brie's "How To Get Angry Without Feeling Guilty." That's fine! She tells you ways in which you can go ahead and have that feeling and not feel guilty about it. But I think that whole idea of expressing the rage, getting it out -- the people in "Network" who open their windows, and yell, "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not gonna take it any more!" So what? You know, then you've got to close the window. You've got to go back inside, and you're still angry -- and it doesn't do very much for you. I don't think, maybe, Adelaide Brie's book does all that much for you, either, for that. It's not enough to just say it's okay to be angry; go ahead and have your rage. You need to know what to do with it -- where to take it; you know, where to channel it. Partly that's what she's saying, actually.

I brought along a little quote that I want to read -- something that I copied down in a notebook I carry around with me all the time. Some years back by the philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, who said ...

TALBOT: That's your "how-to" book.

STAMBERG: This is my "how-to" ... yeah ... yeah ... or "what else?" book! He said, "A room full of experts is only a crowd." That's really pretty good, you know. It's a crowd until it becomes ... until one person in that crowd; one expert among that crowd of people becomes meaningful to you, or important to you in some way, and speaks to a concern that's very much on your mind, and that you need some help with.

MERROW: Susan Stamberg, co-host of National Public Radio's nightly news program, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED. Coming up, we'll be talking with people about what they've learned from their jobs, as OPTIONS IN EDUCATION continues its look at "Learning from Life."

BLAIR: "I never look this way; I'm always too busy. I'm never really noticing things in the city. Look at that wall over there! It has the reflection of some windows on it, and it ... it could be a painting! It's gorgeous. But I never pay any attention! Now I'm noticing everything! It's like being in Grade 1."

MERROW: Naomi Rice is a community health worker in New York City, and she's the first of several people we'll be meeting, as OPTIONS IN EDUCATION asks, "What have you learned from your job?"

RICE: "Tell you this simple thing about me ... I always wanted to have four children. No kiddin'. I always wanted to have four children, because babies -- I love to look and watch babies, the way they move ...

"I mean, the first day I started, I'll never forget. I went to the clinic with [illegible] Cunningham -- and I said, 'This is so beautiful,' you know .... I said, 'I wonder if this is really true.' You know, from the job description, I said, 'Oh, man -- this is like a dream!' You know ... children, mothers, young mothers, wow -- you know -- because a lot of people; they don't like what they're doing -- you know, they do it because they have to do it, and it's a way of ... a means of support. But this job is ... each day is something else that just sparks me up, and, I'm gonna tell you -- mothers, to me, I have ... each mother has their own little hangup; their own little problem, you know. Most of them are on ... like ... the housing, the money, the husband -- all that's on the same thing, you know, but as far as their own little things about what they want to be in life and all, you know ... they think about, but they never talk about, because they feel it's so far-fetched, man, why even get into it? You know ... why even daydream on it, you know.

"And there's a lot of mothers that have it ... you know ... the potential, but they don't have nobody that's behind them, or pushing them or motivating them to say, you know, that this can be done, you know, 'You don't have to worry about welfare; you don't have to worry about this -- you can do it ...' -- you know -- 'and do it ... and have peace of mind, and everything.'

"And a lot of these young mothers don't know how to be the mamas; they don't know how to do ... you know ... it would shock you, but they don't know about it. They wasn't ... their mother didn't teach them, the hospital didn't teach them where they had the baby, you know .. they went through a ... maybe a little jive class, or somethin'. Most of them call jive class, 'cause they still came out; didn't know nothin' -- and they come in here and they have a baby they have to be responsible for. And ... okay, so we're no gods walking down here, either -- we're human beings, too. But what I'm saying is that we try to approach this mother with a little kindness, you know, instead of hittin' over the head, and saying, 'Hey, why you didn't do this?' You know ... "Hey, what's wrong with you? What's the matter for you?' You know ... and I know, because I used this -- in both of my children. I know what it was like. It was a cattle number, and out you go! You know, it was no thing about, 'How you doin', Mommy?' -- or nothing like that. 'Well, baby -- okay, here's your vitamins!' Next appointment, and you got your next appointment, and didn't go back there for six months, or something like that -- with a newborn baby!

"But where I get most of my energy ... and my own convictions, is

that, any time you say you want to do something, you can do it. You know ... yourself. Your body is like a house, you know ... and what you feel spiritually and mentally and everything, that's all you have to worry about. You know ... because you're not gonna find no bed of roses nowhere in this world. In this world, no place -- you're not gonna find no place where you think that you're gonna be able to lay up or stand up for anything without havin' to go through some type of changes. You know, it's not like that. It never was like that, and never will be like that.

"See ... I believe that if we were made in the image and likeness of God, then there shouldn't be nothing that we can't overcome. You know ... and I feel that we've learned, and we're still learning. I myself can say I'm still learning from day to day, and as long as I am working in this area, I will be learning from day to day. You know, it's not gonna stop here or there. You learn something every day in here. You might not learn how to do a certain test every day, but you learn something else about human beings, and that's who we're working with -- and that's the most important thing -- what you learn about human beings."

MERROW: Naomi Rice loves her work. What she's learned is the joy of caring for other people. Not many of us have the chance to learn that lesson. In fact, the business of the city -- buying and selling -- teaches us razzle-dazzle and manipulation; pretending to care -- "Do anything ... but get that sale!" Noah Adams used to be a salesman, and he explained a technique called the "Ben Franklin Close" to Keith Talbot.

ADAMS: Then I would do it, because I always got tickled when I was trying to do it. This is so embarrassing, but I've seen salesmen do it, and listened to recordings, and it's incredible. You just simply ... you get a customer at that point, but you can't close him, and you say ... and he says, "I want to think about it." And you say, "Fine. I really do like people who ... you know, so many people come in here and buy these things, and they're just throwing their money away; they have no idea what they want, and they just buy it and walk out, and I feel strange about that. You know, it bothers me, and it's good to see people who have enough sense and intelligence to want to take the time to decide, 'Is this product right for me? Is this the right price? Will I need it two years from now? Where will we be? What is the situation?' -- that's good, you know, I really like that!"

Then the customer relaxes. And the salesman says, "Let's think about it together -- because this is what I do for a living, and it just delights me to sit down with young people like you, and help you figure out your transportation problems" -- or your educational problems, or your insurance problems, you see, or your freezer-meat problems, whatever -- whatever it is; it doesn't make any difference. Everything's sold the same way. "Let's decide together whether or not it's the right thing to do, and the right thing to do right now."

And it goes like this ... this is called "The Ben Franklin Close" -- and you absolutely have to say, "Do you know who Ben Franklin was?"

You say this to a college professor; I mean, you have to say it. "Do you know who Ben Franklin was?" The reason you have to do it is because you get them involved in interacting with you. "Yeah ... yeah, we know who Ben Franklin was." "Do you know what old Ben Franklin would do when he found himself in a situation like this?" Then you wait, and they'd say ... they have to; you know, they have to say, "No, what would Ben Franklin do?"

At this point, you pull out a piece of paper and pencil and ruler -- it's a white piece of paper; nothing on it. You say, "Ben Franklin, when he found himself in a situation just like this -- couldn't decide what to do. Well, take a piece of paper." And then you take the piece of paper out, and he'd draw a line down the middle -- right down the middle, and you draw a line. And he would then put on one side of that line the reasons why he should do this. Now, you see, you've got the line drawn down the paper, and you've got the reasons why he should on the left side of the paper. Now, let's list together the reasons why this is a good thing for you to do, and for you to do today. Okay, let's do it.

So you take the pencil, and you take the paper, and you -- the salesman -- says, "What are the reasons you want to do this?" All right, and the wife says, "Well, we need a new car. Our old car is shot." And write that down. "What are the other reasons?" "Well, we need a dependable car; somethin' to take the kids to school and that type of thing" -- and so and so. And you just go on like that, and whatever product it is, if the salesman's any good at all, he can come up with about 20 reasons --with the help of the customer -- why this should be done today ... right now.

And you go on ... you write real big. So, you go on to the back of the page. And you're all ... and the right side of the paper is still blank; they don't really know what's gonna go on the right side of the paper -- but you, as the salesman, are writing down these things they tell you why they need this; why they want it; why it's a good thing to do -- you know, encyclopedias for college education -- whatever they are. And then, and this is the fun part of it, then, the salesman says, "Well, let's read this list. Number one ..."

And he reads off number one. "Number two ..." -- and he reads off number two, and they're sitting there nodding at him. He's got 23 reasons that -- their reasons why they need to buy it; why they want it; why they would enjoy it; why it's a good time to buy right now -- 23 reasons.

Well, then what old Ben Franklin would do is take the other side of the page, and write down the reasons why he shouldn't do this at this time. And here's the pretty part. The salesman who has helped them, who has written down, in fact, in big block letters the reasons why they should, then takes the piece of paper very casually, and pushes it across the desk, and gives it to them -- gives them the pen, and says, "Okay!" -- being, you know, very nicely -- "Now, you folks write down the reasons why you shouldn't."

And then he just leans back, and he's not helping them at this point. And they look at each other. "Well, let's see. Bob, what shall we write? Let's put down this: 'shouldn't jump into a decision. Number 2. Maybe it's too much money.'" And the salesman just sitting there, waiting. And they

say ... they look at him for help, you know -- because he helped them with the other one, and he can't think of any reasons why they shouldn't buy it right now. And he just looks at them, and he's sort of tapping his finger on the desk, and time's going on; the clock's ticking, and they get to three, maybe -- four -- I've seen four. And then ... and they're lost. They don't know what to do. So then the salesman says, "Well, is that it? Is that all?" And he says, "Let's see how many you got. Let's see. There's 1,2,3,4,5,6 -- 23 reasons why you should buy it today, and let me see how many you have. Here it says four. This is what Ben Franklin would do. He would then total up the reasons for and the reasons against. Then you just lay the paper on the table, and sit there -- and you sit there and sit there and sit there until they say something -- and the salesmen have a hard time doing this -- you have to be quiet, because the next move is theirs. They have to make it, and you should be willing to sit there and wait 30 minutes for them to do it. Thirty minutes. And at the end of that 30 minutes, if you're good, you can get the real objection that he has, which may not have come out before. Maybe it's the payments -- you can find out what he's concerned about, you know. Or you don't want to ... and they all have these defensive excuses built up.

None of them are effective with a good salesman. The salesman has the perfect response for any of those lines, and then the customer realizes he's used his last excuse.

TALBOT: So what can a consumer possibly say?

ADAMS: Ah ... I've thought of that many times -- and when I used to go to these sales training seminars and listen to these people who are really good, I've tried to figure out a way that a customer could get out of it, and there is only one way, and I figured it out -- and I've used it a couple of times, and it's hard to do -- I mean, you really do have to break out of the role that you've created yourself with the salesman.

When you find yourself in a closing situation, and you're being drawn toward what you know is you buying it, and you paying for it -- agreeing to take this product at this price; these terms. The only way out is to be willing to step out of the role that you've created for yourself, and the salesman's playing along with you, and say, "I don't know why. I just don't want it."

Now, then. The salesman's been trained to handle every possible objection that you can come up with. There is not an objection you can come up with that the salesman has not been trained to take ... turn completely around into a closing device, and pin you down to a contract and a signature and a cash deposit. I mean, if he can get that real objection out of you, no matter what you can say, he can do it if he's good. And if you say, "I don't know why. I just don't want it!" -- it'll floor him. He has no response to that; he'll be flabbergasted, and he'll say again, "Is it the color? Is it me? Is it my company? Is it the delivery time? Can I get you a new one, you know, from the factory? I can get you this in it right now."

TALBOT: Is it my bad breath again?

ADAMS: Yeah. "Is it my bad breath? Is it the price? Can I give you more

money? What is it ... what is it?" He's frantic at this point, because you got to get it; you know, you've got to get that objection, turn it around -- use it to close. And if you say, "I don't know why. I just don't want it. I don't know why. How can I tell you why if I don't know?"

If you tell a salesman that, and it may be the truth, you know -- there may be something telling you that you shouldn't buy this, and you don't want to say, "I don't want to jump into things." You know, don't ... if you really want to defend against a salesman, say that -- "I don't know why -- I just don't want it." And stop ... and repeat it to everything he says. Don't relax, and say, "Well, you know, I really don't want to jump into things."

You know, he's gonna take that, and he's gonna say, "It's an important consideration -- you should think about it. What is it we're gonna think about? Let's think about it together!"

"Free Man In Paris" sung by Joni Mitchell.

MERROW: Noah Adams used to be a car salesman -- and according to him, he learned how to manipulate people in his job. Our job is central to our identity -- and most of us would have a hard time without that security. To make sure we don't lose our jobs, we compete with our fellow workers. Warren Farrell, author of "The Liberated Man", told Bill Siemering that the corporate man in America suffers most from our competitive work ethic.

FARRELL: They're constantly worried about getting the approval of the person above them -- and they're often afraid to bring up creative ideas for fear that those creative ideas will fail. Some of the most important and innovative dimensions of corporate life are missed out on. Almost no one in a corporate decision-making arena knows how to draw out the sense of potential of another person who is in a competitive position with him.

So ... for example, if you, Bill, were to bring up an idea in a corporation, and you and I were headed toward somewhat the same positions, I would be very careful to maybe take your idea, and maybe say, "Well, I thought of that a year ago, and yeah, I think it's good" -- or else, I'd figure out some faults in your idea and put you down for it. But very few men in that position will say things like, "Gee, Bill, it's a good idea. Can you expand on this part of it a little bit more? I don't understand it." And try to tap into something that I think is a germ of potential in what you have, that could help you look good to the rest of the corporation -- because it's not in my interests to help you look good, so therefore, it's not in my interests to help your idea flourish and germinate.

SIEMERING: So, what can a person do in a corporation that may want to be a more liberated person?

FARRELL: First, have the psychological attitude that they can lose the job in that corporation. Once they feel that they can risk that position -- either the promotion or the actual total position -- then, in a sense, they

just free themselves to go ahead and express their creativity, and try new ideas -- and if it works, it works, and if it doesn't work, they'll try it some place else. And, that's really all you can ask a person to do, is to try it, and if it doesn't work, realize that probably, that's a sign that it may very well be -- it could be that you're wrong. And it could also mean that that's the limitation of the corporation, and that's a sign for you to start your own operation or to become a consultant, and try a creative new idea with six or seven different businesses that can accept it -- and oftentimes, after you're a consultant to a number of different corporations and it works there, then the original corporation comes back and hires you back at twice the money for, you know, to do that. And it's only when you really make it on the outside that people no longer see you as a peer; that they start accepting what you, you know, what you have to offer.

MERROW: Warren Farrell, author of "The Liberated Man", talking with Bill Siemering of Station KCCM in Moorehead, Minnesota.

> BLAU: "You can tell this is an Executive Secretary place, because the rugs are so thick! I've just gotten off the elevator. 'Executive Secretaries, Inc.' -- very nice doors here. Beautiful office ... but where is the Executive Secretary?"

MERROW: Next, OPTIONS IN EDUCATION asked Secretary Connie Chancellor what she's learned from living.

CHANCELLOR: Very ambitious people are often very depressed, and they get to where they wanted. I look at executives, and notice them -- and I don't get that they're any more satisfied than I am or any more ... I don't get a great ... look at their faces ... I don't get a sense of ... so, ambition is ... ambition is trying to get from one point to another place to another, just because you think that's where you ought to go. There's an "ought" in there. I know in my case ... somewhere I decide, well, the way to make it -- the way to make it -- is to be good. So I grew up thinking I just had to be a very good little girl all the time. So ...

TALBOT: Those things weren't working for you.

CHANCELLOR: It worked ... obviously, it worked for me when I was a little girl because I survived -- I made it. I mean, I made ... I grew up, and I made it. But as an adult, no, it didn't -- those same things did'nt -- it didn't work for me to always be "good" -- and there was no cheese in that for me. There were some times when I wanted to be naughty ...

TALBOT: Where did that leave you?

CHANCELLOR: Left me very unsatisfied. I thought, well, maybe getting married would make my life a little more satisfying. I remember the day after ... I was married on Saturday, and came back to the apartment on Monday, and I remember saying to myself, "Well, I got married! Now what? I did that. Now, what's next?" And it was as though I was a little machine acting out all these things that I ought to do -- get married, then you have a child -- that's gonna do it -- and that didn't do it. I love my daughter,

but that -- that wasn't nurturing for me, in a way that I can now nurture myself.

TALBOT: It's a change in expectation.

CHANCELLOR: It's a change of point of view. If I were to have 3 cars instead of 2, or 2 instead of 1, that's not gonna change my life.

TALBOT: Very often, people get depressed because they have very high expectations.

CHANCELLOR: That's true ... because they really think their lives are gonna be different. Something, you know ... something will be different if I; if I only had that ... if I only have a husband -- if I only have a child -- that your life is going to be different. That's not my experience.

MERROW: This week, we've been asking what you've learned from life. Next week, we begin to ask why. Join us as OPTIONS IN EDUCATION tours suburbia, and visits with the people who produce the TV programs and commercials you watch.

BLAIR: "We're ending up here at a gorgeous park right in the middle of Washington, and I bought some peanuts from a man on the street corner a couple of blocks back. He assured me that pigeons will eat peanuts. But I'm worried about it. They don't really seem to like them very much here.

"There's a great big fat pigeon sitting over on top of George Washington at the center of this park. I think the world could be divided between two kinds of people -- pigeon lovers and pigeon haters. Here's one, right on my hand! Here ... they have a terrible life! Look ... a hundred of them going after one peanut! In the wild, pigeons were cliff-dwellers, apparently, that's why they take to cities so well. The cliffs of the buildings appeal to them. I guess they learn to adjust to city life just the way we all do. Great adapters."

MERROW: This special series on "Learning from Life" is being produced by Jo Ellyn Rackleff and Keith Talbot. Reports for this program came from Marcy Winograd, KPCS, Pasadena, California; Bill Siemering, KCCM, Moorehead, Minnesota; Clint Coleman in Baltimore; Park Blanton, in San Francisco; and Jay Kernis, Susan Stamberg and Jackie Judd in Washington, D.C.

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"LEARNING FROM LIFE"

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1-2
GAY KINNEY, National Public Radio, talks about her childhood in the suburbs	3-4
WENDY BLAIR visits Reston, Virginia	5-6
SUSAN CHAMBERLIN, Reston housewife, talks about divorce in the suburbs	7-9
JANICE DUCASSE talks about her childhood in Long Island, New York, where television was one of her teachers	10-12
MARLEY CASAGRANDE, housewife and mother, talks about the effects of television on her young son	12-13
ROBERT KNOLL, professional ad writer	14-16
DR. GEORGE GERBNER, Annenberg School of Communications, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	16-17
PAUL SPREIREGEN, architectural critic, talks about planned communities	18-19

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"LEARNING FROM LIFE"

PART 2

MERROW: What are the most important lessons you've learned in your life, and where did you learn them?

MAN: I would say probably on the street, where peer pressures and peer groups decided exactly what I would learn and how I would handle myself, as opposed to, say, parents at home who really weren't aware of where I was headed.

MAN: My first understanding of life came from my own mother. The second area of my education came when I was about 14 years old, and I got a job during the summer vacation where I had to measure up to certain things that I had never had to measure up to before -- because I was working with men, and I found out first off, how hard it was for many people to ... really to make a living. I found out about the importance of getting to work on time, of paying attention to instructions, and carrying out my part of -- particularly in jobs that require teamwork. I was a stranger there; I had to learn to get along with people, and I learned there are certain general rules that seem to apply universally.

If you are friendly, and if you seem to be willing to cooperate ... if you show an interest and a loyalty to a city and the people, why, they'll accept you.

SMITH: Where do you learn the most?

MAN: Well, that's a pretty hard question. Not from Barbara Walters ... certainly not! I don't know ... hard knocks, from home, sitting around. Not too much from work, either. I don't learn all that ... well, I learn "things" at work, but they don't form my lifestyle. I think it's pretty well formed right now.

MERROW: I'm John Merrow -- and those people talked to reporter Phil Smith in a neighborhood bar in Buffalo, New York. Despite the long hours we spend in school, the things we learn about life often aren't taught by school teachers. We learn from our family and our environment. In fact, everyone you meet in life is a teacher -- each person teaches you what they know, or what they are. But the kinds of teachers you will have outside school depends on the neighborhood you come from. This week, we're going to the suburbs.

BLAIR: A flight of ducks across the lake. Townhouses on every shore. A lot of the houses have boats tied up to their back doors. It's Lake Ann, in Reston, Virginia ... and I'm Wendy Blair for NPR's OPTIONS IN EDUCATION. This week, we're continuing to ask, "What have you learned from life?"

WOMAN: We like to be close ...

MAN: Close to the city life.

WOMAN: Because we work in the city, and we shop here.

MAN: We even spend some of our nights here.

WOMAN: Then, why would we choose to live in the country?

MAN: In a Fairlington Villages condominium townhouse?

WOMAN: One of the reasons is the homes.

MAN: Right. They don't build them like this any more. The brick construction -- the hard wood floors.

WOMAN: With the new kitchens and baths, the patios -- the feel of Williamsburg.

MAN: The price.

WOMAN: They're all new inside.

MAN: With solid old craftsmanship outside.

WOMAN: And speaking of outside, there are lots of old shade trees and rolling hills ...

MAN: And swimming pools, and lighted tennis courts, and a community ...

MERROW: The suburbs are part of the American Dream -- safe, clean, friendly, beautiful -- the good life. You know, you get off the Interstate, drive down the ramp, go past the Burger King in the shopping mall until you come to Sherwood Estates or Waverly Hills. Many of us grew up there. Turn left on "Olde" -- spelled o-l-d-e -- Krafts Road, or Ivy Oak Lane. The suburbs are the home of the nuclear family, and there's a member of the family causing problems -- the television set. For, ironically, television brings the crime on the streets of San Francisco and New York right back into our living rooms -- so in this program, we're going to look at what television is teaching, and ask some of the people who grew up and live in the suburbs how well it prepares you for life.

WOMAN: I was brought up in the suburbs, in a "bedroom community" of New York City, and it was a very plastic kind of environment -- still is -- and I hate it.

MAN: I once read a remark that education isn't taught -- it's caught.

WOMAN: We've been trying to explain to him that these super-heroes are make believe, and that they aren't real; they're just cartoons -- and that people can't do the

things that they do. People can't fly like Superman.

WOMAN: We lived on a block, and everyone's mother took care of everyone's children. I mean, you never got lost.

MAN: They were really designed for the same type of imaginary family -- and not too well, at that!

MERROW: All American communities are planned to one degree or another. Plans are good in some ways, but they can be restrictive.

BLAIR: As long as there have been people, there have been plans -- and a plan, after all, is really just somebody saying, "What I've learned in my life can help you maybe deal with your problems." This artificial lake, and the town around it -- Reston -- is one of our newer attempts to deal with the problems of living.

In 1961, Robert E. Simon bought 6,750 acres out here. That was the first step in developing his plan, which he called "Reston." His own initials -- R-E-S -- with "town" on the end. In 6 years though, he was bankrupt -- and he sold his land and his plan to Gulf Oil, which is probably the reason why I've only seen Gulf Stations here on the roads. In any case, the plan that Mr. Simon had was a reaction to people's needs for quiet, for space and light -- and for safety; for the things they felt they weren't finding in the city.

I know I came out here today because I have a friend who settled here nearly a year ago from the heart of the city where we both lived in the same apartment building, and she tells me that it's partly an escape -- that is, she doesn't hear loud rock music and screeching of brakes and fire engines and police helicopters around her building. The way she's explained it to me is she looks out her dining room window at trees -- and it does something for her soul.

MERROW: Gay Kinney grew up in Darien, Connecticut -- on Pond Field Lane. She told Keith Talbot what life there taught her.

GAY KINNEY

TALBOT: Your mother was the planner and the scheduler.

KINNEY: Oh, was she ever! I mean, she had every moment ... you know ... every moment filled. I'm not meaning to suggest that it was well organized at all; I mean, it was always just last minute-type things, and, you know, getting places late -- I was never anywhere on time when I was little. And you know what that's done? I am a fanatic about being places on time -- I'm really -- I'm to the point of being obnoxious, because I usually get places and no one's there for hours!

But, anyway, that's what that's ... that's the effect that had on me. But she ... she ... I think she figured -- we've never really talked about it, but I think she figured if she kept us all busy, that we wouldn't be getting drunk and stoned and into trouble, which is ... which is perfectly legitimate, because in that kind of community, there

was a lot ... there was a whole lot of unhappiness among little kids who didn't have, you know, their days filled -- so they took uppers, and they got stoned and drunk all the time, and -- that's true in suburbia today. That's ... my brother and sister are no different. They're at home still. My little brother watches a lot more television than I ever watched, but I think that's because my mother's tired of planning his day. He's the fifth in a line, you know, ranging from 29 to 14, and she's about had it up to here with ... "Well, at 3:00 o'clock you do this, and at 4:30 you do this, and I have to take you here at 5:00 and pick you up here at 7:00, and ..."

TALBOT: So we have the scene of a community that was planned. You say everyone there had a pretty similar idea of what they wanted. They arrived there, and had to spend a lot of time making ...

KINNEY: And money.

TALBOT: And money making sure that their children stayed in line, if you like -- the only alternative being for them -- the only thing that could even simulate spontaneity, which is a pretty strange phrase, but anyway -- the only thing that could seem to simulate spontaneity, being drugs or television.

KINNEY: That's right ... that's exactly right. And as I think about it, you know, you asked me if I spent much time alone as a child. I really don't remember ever being alone -- whether it was because of my activities or because of my family -- and I think that's very unfortunate. I think that's made me the person I am, who now needs people. I have to have people, or I go crazy, and ... I can live with my television and my entertainment -- reading and, you know, that kind of thing, but I can't live without people for very long.

TALBOT: You were "set up" in other words -- you have expectations now.

KINNEY: Yeah ... right! And I ...

TALBOT: And when the reality doesn't meet those expectations, what do you do?

KINNEY: I get depressed. When I'm not ... when I don't have access to people -- when I'm alone a lot, I get very down, and ... with me, I mean, this is what I'm all about; I'm either up here on Cloud 9 -- or I'm way at the bottom. You know, there is no happy medium. I'm either just great -- you know, you ask me how I am, and I'm on top of the world, or I feel like ... you know! But I think if I'd learned as a child how to be a little bit more self-motivated, you know, and ...

TALBOT: If everything hadn't been planned for you.

KINNEY: Yeah ... right. If I'd had to figure out some things on my own. I don't ... I don't dump on my parents, though ... they're really, you know, they're very wonderful people -- they just have different ideas about what they want than I have, and that's what generations are for.

MERROW: Gay Kinney objects to the sameness of the suburbs. Everyone around you makes the same amount of money -- and maybe all have the same views about politics and life, and watch the same TV programs. A little later in this program, we'll visit a mother at home with her television set, and talk about some of the newest findings about what TV teaches.

But the suburbs can't be all bad. After all, some people move there for a sense of community -- for knowing their neighbors, and for different kinds of learning experiences.

BLAIR: This is the Lake Ann Center -- and it's just a whole lot of long bulletin boards filled with all kinds of notices for everybody, and I'm sure it's the best place in Reston to find out what's going on.

A bulletin board is a kind of a social map, and you could see it as just like a school, except that here anybody can be a teacher; you don't have to be a "teacher teacher" to post some notice. I want to see what the people of Reston are teaching each other. Under the "For Sale" section, you can buy something called "Knit magic -- hardly used. Complete with threading needle and instruction booklet. In original carton -- a great gift. Act now." The telephone number. And I can go to something that looks fascinating here. "Artistic therapy. Color is much more important to us than we are consciously aware of, and it can be used as an aid to healing."

"Watch" -- oh, I know what that group is. "For better television for your kids" -- and there's a picture of a pussycat, and a telephone number to call. I'm sure this is a group that I've heard of before that is very active in pushing for getting violence, among other things, off TV programs for children. Oh, here's something. "German Shepherd puppy dogs" -- and a whole lot of telephone numbers that you can tear off and take with you, except half of them are gone. How many are there in a litter? It doesn't say.

"After school children's photography workshop." And here's something ... "Free Kick -- the first issue of the Reston Soccer Association." Oh ... now under the miscellaneous section of the bulletin board, "The hows and whys of becoming a homeowner" -- and a great big photograph of the Mahareshi Mahesh Yogi ... and the TM movement has obviously come to Reston in a big way. He's smelling a rose, as he always is. It's a lecture -- he's giving a lecture <u>today</u>!

Oh, there's a note for a family cartoon festival. Also, Tai Chi, the authentic Chinese moving meditation which inspires relaxation, physical fitness and long life. That happens at 10:00 o'clock in the mornings, I think, on Tuesdays. "The Reston Chorale presents Mozart, Dominican vespers, Brahms -- at the Reston Catholic Community Center. Free admission." Here's one -- "Sisterhood is blooming. Springtime will never be the same." Now, what in the world is that all about?

Also under "miscellaneous" -- "Eight seats available in bus pool from Reston to Washington. I drive -- you ride, in 16 passenger Mercedes bus. Air conditioned, FM Radio ... smoking permitted --

I'm against smoking ... -- "free trial ride. Call Hank Richmond for details. 8:30 to 5:00 o'clock" -- and the two numbers. Okay, Hank!

BLAIR: I wonder if he's home.

(PHONE RINGING)

BLAIR: Hello, Mr. Richmond? This is Wendy Blair calling. I'm standing here right by the bulletin board in Reston, and I've got your ad for rides to Washington. I'm thinking of moving out here to Reston myself, and I just wanted to check on a few things. Can you tell me ... it's about an hour, right? Door-to-door, from the city?

RICHMOND: It's more than an hour -- it's about an hour and a half, each way -- so about 2 or 3 hours a day is spent in commuting.

BLAIR: You know, I have a friend who moved out here for safety reasons -- to get away from the crime further into the city. Are there any crime problems here in Reston?

RICHMOND: Yeah ... I think as the people ... more people move out here, so that the crime problems you have in the city. Because ah ... for example, my car was stolen out of my driveway last Christmas. You know, we recognize there are problems out here.

BLAIR: Well, then, why do you live out here?

RICHMOND: I don't understand it myself. I'm trying to get out of the commuting business if I can, one way or the other.

BLAIR: Uh huh.

RICHMOND: Like, for instance, this morning ...

MAN: About 10 or 11 minutes ago, I was at 15th and K. Now, I'm pulling up in front a beautifully restored brick townhouse on a winding street, covered with big old shade trees. I'm in Fairlington Villages -- and the past really has come to life here. Townhouses and apartments that are built with slate roofs ...

MERROW: That commuter raises some important questions about "Learning from Life" -- does your environment expand or limit your opportunities to learn, and the second, and perhaps, more important, is -- do you have any choice, financially? Most suburbs -- especially planned communities

like Reston -- have their own newspaper. I've got one here from another suburb in Maryland. It's called "The Times -- Columbia's Illustrated Journal." Let's see what's new. The lead story speculates on a new shopping mall to be built for business, cultural and entertainment center. It says it's been designed through to the year 2,000 -- and it will continue to grow and change over the next 25 years, and into the future.

There are also announcements for a Community Center performance of "Fiddler on the Roof" -- and news of an attempted suicide. You know, suburbs are considered the home of the nuclear family, but while the men are commuting, it's the home of the women and children. A recent study says that 15% of the population of the United States takes a mild tranquilizer called Valium -- and most of the users are middle-class women. Alcohol is a problem for men and women, too. We have to ask ourselves if all the tranquility is real, or chemical, and if it's good for you. But obviously, the suburbs are good places in a lot of ways, and people move there for good reasons -- for community and for new learning experiences. Jo Ellyn Rackleff talked with Susan Chamberlin, who lives in Reston with her family, about why they moved there, what they've learned, how they've changed and what they can teach us.

SUSAN CHAMBERLIN

CHAMBERLIN: Why Reston? I think, basically ... I had grown up in Minnesota, in the woods -- in a town of 200 people. Reston is in the woods, and I think that ... we had two children -- we liked the idea of the planned community, and the activities. There is everything from -- everybody is involved in soccer except my husband ... my two kids play, and I play, and ... there are ... the schools are good.

RACKLEFF: Tell me again the name of the street you live on, and tell me something about your neighbors.

CHAMBERLIN: I live on Old Trail Drive, and it's a horseshoe-shaped street with 2 or 3 cul-de-sacs off it. When we all moved in and bought those houses new, we spent the first 6 months raking our yards, and planting grass, and saying how great it was to finally own a home. Most of the people had been in apartments -- this was their first house. We went from that stage to ... and everything was house oriented -- we were choosing wallpaper and painting bedrooms, and every ... pretty much house oriented. We went from that stage to kind of a period where it was ... there was a lull, and about -- we've owned those houses for 5 years this Spring, and then there was a rash 2 years ago, of divorces and separations, and it was ... and people in marriage -- real marriage crisis ... women feeling that they had to get away for weekends by themselves to sort things through ... so, because of that, there's been a tremendous turnover of housing, and now from knowing practically everybody on the street -- at least by face and by name -- I know very few. I know the ones that have somehow got through the marriage crisis, held together, and decided that they'll stay, and I think -- I just have a positive feeling that now the crisis will ... after the crisis, it will hold, and these families will probably stay together.

RACKLEFF: One thing we're trying to get at is, you know, cities are

planned, and suburbs are planned. Do you think that living in Reston expands your opportunities for learning -- or limits them?

CHAMBERLIN: I have very positive feelings about Reston. I've felt like I have grown over the last 2 years, tremendously -- the change in my outlook on life has been fantastic. I was in a consciousness raising group ... so that group was a catalyst for ... it was a period in our lives when ... we came into the group, knowing that there was going to be a change; that somehow what we had been doing before was no longer going to work over the next few years. We went through that winter, meeting once a week for a full morning, and came out in the Spring with ... knowing, having worked through with these other people, our thoughts and our plans and what we had wanted to do -- and I got involved in "Rustlings," which is a small literary magazine.

RACKLEFF: Susan ... I remember a poem that you showed me, that had a lot to do with life there in Reston -- it may have been by you. Do you know which one I'm talking about?

CHAMBERLIN: The only one that intrigued me about a year and a half ... about a year ago, last summer, was the crisis in the neighborhood was ending, and I felt I wanted to make a statement to a friend, and I used the name "Sherry" -- and Sherry did live across the street, and she was a very good friend, who has since moved to Syracuse:

> "Dear Sherry, I have a choice right now. I can write a letter to you, or stand at my oracle -- the kitchen stove -- and fill another stew pot. Raw carrots being healthier than cooked, I find it easy to be at the typewriter. All day, thoughts about this crazy street have been spinning in my head. Remember the Andersons? They lived about 6 doors down on the left. I talked to Kate yesterday, and she said they're splitting the first of the month. Would you believe they are the 14th couple in the neighborhood to separate since you have left?
>
> It's crazy ... it's a plague. All these really nice people deciding they don't want to live together any more. I don't understand what's happened! I remember when the Andersons moved in -- just 2 weeks after us -- how excited Kate was, talking about the decorating of the house, and landscaping the yard. That was only 3 years ago, when we all bought the American Dream, courtesy of Kestral Homes, Inc.
>
> What's changed? When I'm at bridge, why don't I hear about the new promotion, and the kids' report cards? Instead I hear, "He tunes in the TV, and tunes me out. He doesn't talk to me. I'm getting my Masters in political science, and all he asks is 'What's for dinner?'"
>
> I listen, and wonder -- where are the men that we

dreamed such wonderful dreams with 10 years ago? Everyone seems to be on their own trip. He's off golfing, or she's playing tennis. You know, Sherry, I can almost predict the next couple to part company. There seems to be a recipe -- first the wife starts looking tense, and doesn't laugh much. Then, the house starts looking pretty messy, and all the plants die. Ask a husband at this point how things are, and he says, "Fine ... just fine." Ask a wife how things are, and she looks at you with big, frightened eyes, and says, "Okay ..." -- and takes a deep breath.

When finally, they have admitted their unhappiness, the big split comes. He gets an apartment, and she keeps the house and kids. Then they hassle about money. Last week I ran into Janie, who has been separated for about 7 months, and asked how things were. I got this great big smile, and one word -- "Fantastic!"

The relationship between everyone has improved. He and she are now talking like friends for the first time in years, and he's spending more time with the kids -- all day Sunday. That old cliche, "I'm sorry to hear about your separation", somehow wasn't appropriate.

Sarah was over for a cup of coffee, and we were talking about the Anderson's separation. Sarah said it was better than staying together and going crazy. Later, she brought over the "Split Level Trap" for me to read. It turned out to be too statistical. You know me -- I want the gory details about her affair with the guru, and him shacking up with a belly dancer. Harold Robbins has ruined me forever.

The book was published in 1960, and talks about the problems of suburban living -- especially for the housewife. Do you realize, 16 years later, in 1976, we are still sending the American housewife to psychiatrists and mental health centers in droves? Statistically, we are the unhappiest group, when compared to single women, married men and single men. There must be some way to stay home and raise children without losing our sensitivity, taking to drink, going crazy -- or getting divorced.

Fourteen separations. Who's next? Sometimes I think the President, or God, or somebody should declare a general amnesty, and all marriage would become null and void in one fell swoop. Let everyone live alone -- just think what that would do for the economy -- for a period of six months. What would happen? How many people would go

back to their current mate? How many people would remain uncommited? What would happen to marriage if society's pressures were really off?

The thought of marital amnesty blows my mind! I have to stop writing to you, and give the President the word. Thanks for listening. Write soon. Love, Susan. P.S. - How is your new job?"

RACKLEFF: Susan Chamberlin, poet in the suburbs.

ANNOUNCER: HOUSE AND HOME Magazine said:

WOMAN: Fairlington Villages has elements which are considered luxuries today. Slate roofing, heavy hard wood doors, full plaster walls, and brick and stone exteriors. And both the units themselves, and the site were soundly planned.

ANNOUNCER: The site they refer to is a landscape of rolling hills and old shade trees -- a country setting. And the wonder is it's only 10 minutes from Washington! Prize winning construction and enviable location ...

MERROW: Janice Ducasse grew up on Long Island. She thinks the suburbs teaches lessons -- good and bad.

JANICE DUCASSE

DUCASSE: I do remember not having all that much money given to me. We always had an allowance that ... when I was younger, we'd get 15¢, and my father would take us to the dime store on Saturday, and I'd spend it. I never kept the money ... it was something to go and do -- you know -- pre ... learning how to be a consumer, I guess, you know -- buying -- and I had a set counter that I would go to for my 15¢, and my brother would have his own counter ... maybe ...

TALBOT: What was that?

DUCASSE: I don't know what my ... well, what I bought was all these little girls' things -- you know, little dolls. I remember, for years, I'd buy these little pink dolls that were, you know, maybe an inch high, and they were rubber, and you could chew on them if you wanted to chew on them! And then I'd buy doll clothes ... but my mother made a lot of those; she made the doll clothes .. and I'd buy little ... I mean, it was all geared towards being a little girl.

TALBOT: Why did you get an allowance? Why do you think your parents gave you an allowance ... wanted you to have an allowance?

DUCASSE: I think it was an activity that my father wanted to do with us, and ... he needed to give us the money to ... I don't know; maybe that

was his way of training us with money -- because he was a banker, after all, so he may have been conscious, and that you had to learn how to manage your money.

TALBOT: Did you?

DUCASSE: Oh, God, no -- I'm terrible with money. I worry about it more than I need to; I spend it more than I should, and ...

TALBOT: What should you have done? How could you have learned better?

DUCASSE: Well, he ... I think ... I think they always thought ... no, that's ... my mother did this to me ... my mother ... she would never let me know how much money I was able to ever have. She'd always be very, very ... she'd be sparing with money; she'd never give me enough. I always felt like I didn't have enough money. It would have been better if my mother would have said, "Here are x dollars to go out and shop for yourself" -- than to take me to a store and say, you know, "Well, here's ..." -- you know -- "what do you want?" And I'd say, "This is what I want." I'd never look at the pricetag anymore -- it was, and I'd even ... didn't matter any more, and she was forced into buying it if it was, you know, $25 or $50, because I had chosen this thing -- and I grew to have a very expensive taste that way, because it didn't matter how much it was to me, and I ... I didn't learn to handle my money; I mean, I learned that ... I mean, I wish I had learned better to handle my money ... I spend it frivolously ... sometimes, and sometimes ... I go through periods where I don't spend on junk, and then I'll, you know, then I'll say, "Well, I have enough money" -- and I'll buy a lot of junk, you know ... and ... I'm getting better at it.

We had a television set ... the first people on the block, so my mother had a lot of children all the time ... in the early fifties, and it was something you did when you got home; you turned on the television set, and I watched all the early ... the movies of the forties, and we spent a lot of time watching the 1940's go by, you know -- there's no reality there. I never saw these kinds of people, but I really loved the movies -- musicals were my favorite for years, you know ... The Early Show in New York, and Million Dollar Movie -- I could watch one movie several times in the week, you know.

In those days ... oh, I remember, you know ... I remember distinctly one commercial -- it was Colgate. Colgate had a great commercial with a tooth -- remember Mr. Tooth? Mr. Tooth had a little face on him, and he was part of the Colgate commercial -- the villain was tooth decay, and Mr. Tooth was all shiny and bright, and the villain wanted to get at Mr. Tooth somehow. I mean, the preoccupation with dentistry in my family was great! I mean, I went to the dentist from age 1 -- and I've not stopped since, and ... is total ... my mother; every six months, and I always had decays and cavities, and you know, the dentist would tell me I had soft teeth ... which I think now is not an acceptable thing; I

don't think there's such a thing as soft teeth -- it's something to do with your ... your ... what is it -- the coating on your teeth, that ...

TALBOT: Plaque.

DUCASSE: The plaque, maybe, that's ... I don't know ... but ...

TALBOT: I learned that on television, did you?

DUCASSE: Yeah ... where else do you learn about teeth but on television?

MERROW: That's what Janice Ducasse learned from watching TV fifteen years ago -- but what are we learning today?

BLAIR: Nicholas Johnson, the television critic, once said that when he was visiting other countries, people would ask him, "What do people in America do? How do you spend your time?" And the most honest response that Johnson could think of was, "Well, we watch television!" And, indeed, a survey in 1975 concluded that in the average American home, the TV set is turned on for the equivalent of almost 2 days out of the week -- that's 43 hours and 42 minutes of television every week. And, as you can hear, the tube is on here in this home on Barrell Cooper Court. Marley Casagrande's son, Adam, is here, and Marley -- I want to ask you straight off, what do you think Adam is picking up from TV?

MARLEY CASAGRANDE

CASAGRANDE: I think the violence on television, and the fighting on television is picked up by most children who watch "super heroes" -- Superman, Ultraman, Spiderman ... that's one of the reasons that we've limited his TV watching so greatly.

BLAIR: Do you see violence in the way they behave to each other -- that seems to come from TV, rather than ...

CASAGRANDE: It's very hard to know whether it comes from TV or not. I think all children have basic aggressions, and I don't know -- my guess would be that television certainly reinforces them.

BLAIR: How powerful do you feel television is with him? How does he respond to TV?

CASAGRANDE: With him, it's very powerful, and it always has been. He's always been glued to the television when it's on. He's not a child who will get up and play, and go back and forth between the TV and his toys. When the television is on, he sits in front of it, and he's glued to it.

BLAIR: Has it cropped up in things that he talks about? He does watch "Mr. Rogers" and ...

CASAGRANDE: Occasionally. He watches "Mr. Rogers" occasionally, and he watches "Sesame Street" regularly -- and he spends much more time talking about "Star Trek", "Superman" and "Batman".

BLAIR: The ones that he doesn't see?

CASAGRANDE: The ones that he doesn't see, except, occasionally, at a friend's house ... on a very limited basis. We've been trying to explain to him that these super-heroes are make-believe, and that they aren't real; they're just cartoons, and that people can't do the things that they do ... people can't fly like Superman, and we've told him how children have been hurt by trying to fly ... flying off of a roof, and breaking an arm or a leg. It's very hard to know whether he fully understands -- he says he does ... he says that he knows they are make-believe, and that real people can't do those things. I hope he does understand.

BLAIR: What about the idea that, in a way, we all need at some stage in our life -- maybe it's at 3 or 5, or, you know ... when we're children -- to have the fantasy that we are super, or that we need fairy tales.

CASAGRANDE: I thought about that, because I read that to a limited extent, and I don't necessarily disagree with that. The thing that frightens me is in a child who is so young, when we don't know whether at 3, he can distinguish between fantasy and reality. I don't really see terribly harmful effects of it later on, when children are much older, as far as Grimms' Fairy Tales -- and even Mother Goose; they can be very morbid at times -- but it does concern me to have a 3 year old, or a 2 year old, or even a 4 year old viewing it -- when the line between fantasy and reality is not clearly defined in their minds.

BLAIR: Do you have plans for how you're going to restrict television as he gets older?

CASAGRANDE: Yeah ... I think even good television shouldn't be viewed more than an hour or so a day -- even "Sesame Street" -- I just don't think it's healthy for any child to watch any television, so I think we'll probably place a time limit on how much he can watch, and there will be certain programs which he can choose from.

BLAIR: Why? Why do you feel that more than an hour a day is not good?

CASAGRANDE: I think watching television is a very passive experience. It's a ... it requires visual cues, and that's all -- especially in Adam's case, where he does nothing else. When he's watching TV, he becomes lethargic and cranky after watching even an hour of "Sesame Street".

MERROW: Adult Americans watch an average of 5 hours a day -- and children watch even more. In fact, by age 18, young Americans spend 50% more time in front of the TV than in the classroom. Only sleep occupies a larger portion of the day. Critics of television focus on two main areas -- TV advertising, and the violent or excessively sexual television programs. To understand TV is to understand why it does the things it does. Douglas Cater recently wrote in the "Saturday Review":

> "The broadcast industry is based on a marketplace unlike any other private enterprise economy. Broadcasting offers

its product free to the consumer, and depends on advertising to supply -- by the latest count -- gross annual revenues of four and a half billion dollars. As a result, commercial television's prime allegiance is to the merchant -- not to the viewer."

And with public broadcasting's increasing dependence on corporate underwriting, it, too, feels the pinch of the marketplace. Keith Talbot talked to a man who wrote some of the most famous lines and music for television ever.

THEME SONG FROM "THE JOLLY GREEN GIANT" TV COMMERCIAL

ROBERT KNOLL

KNOLL: Are people really interested in whether a pea has a thick skin or a thin skin?

MERROW: His name is Robert Knoll. He's Vice President of Creative Services for Leo Burnett, USA -- the third largest advertising agency in the nation.

TALBOT: Aren't a lot of the characters that you use ... couldn't some people call those exaggerations? Tony the Tiger and the Pillsbury Dough Boy.

KNOLL: Well, you certainly could call them fantasies -- and they're not; I don't think they're exaggerations. They're vehicles.

TALBOT: But it isn't so much that the product has an identity -- it's more that you're grafting an identity onto it, isn't that ... is that unfair to say?

KNOLL: No, that's not unfair to say at all. I mean, you're cutting something out of whole cloth, in this case -- building an identity, which it did not have.

TALBOT: So, do you start when you're doing something like that -- with RC or with any other product -- do you examine the product first, look for some sort of intrinsic qualities in it, or lay it on?

KNOLL: Yes, we look for something in the product to write about. You know, if there's any way to express it, I don't know a better way than ... we call a ... find the inherent drama in the product.

The mood fit -- the kind of thing that the United writers were trying to do, and they wanted a great, big, wide open, inspirational, come-and-see-the-USA-type of song ...

THEME FROM THE UNITED AIRLINES TV COMMERCIAL

TALBOT: Is that United Airlines spot what you might call a "bandwagon" approach? You're sort of saying "Mother country, welcome" -- and then at

the end it happens to be an airline.

KNOLL: Yes, I ... very much so. I heard them referred -- that whole category of commercial referred to as "the inspirationals." And I thought that was a very good name for it. But it's a tone of voice; it's kind of a rouser bandwagon thing.

TALBOT: It's the kind of tone of voice that might have been used in a religious service at one time.

KNOLL: Yes, my own word for those things has always been "the gospel sound."

END OF THE UNITED AIRLINES COMMERCIAL THEME SONG

TALBOT: One criticism of advertising is that commercials don't teach you to wait for things.

KNOLL: I really don't think that advertising is the only thing in this world that is frustrating people.

TALBOT: No, but it doesn't teach you to wait. It says, "Here it is. You've got to have it now."

KNOLL: I think there's such a thing as going around and looking under every bush for some funny motives here.

JINGLE FOR THE "GLAD BAG" COMMERCIAL

I know I read things in magazines and newspapers about how advertising works on your consciousness, and how you really have to go into the supermarket armed to the teeth with resistance, and make a list, and don't go when you're hungry, and ... one of the magazines referred to it as "guerrilla warfare in the supermarket" -- and that only seems to me to be really just nonsense; I mean, I'm not gonna spend my life going around worrying about whether I am a slave to unknown forces.

EXCERPT FROM ADD FOR "CAMAY" SOAP

You know, this gets into that whole question of advertising as a social force, and is it promoting immaturity? Is it frustrating people? Is it warping their delicate little psyches?

TALBOT: Is it creating anxiety?

KNOLL: I would think that if it ... for all the anxiety it creates, it also must allay an awful lot of it, because ...

TALBOT: Explain that.

KNOLL: Well, it's reassuring people, a lot of times, for one thing, you know ... in a lot of cases, the effect of advertising is to reassure somebody who's just bought a new car that it's a good car.

TALBOT. Oh. What if it isn't a good car, though?

KNOLL: Well, most cars are pretty good cars, though.

JINGLE FOR A NATIONAL BEER AD

You know, a person who advertises a branded product has what you call a "consumer franchise" which is worth millions of dollars to him -- and the worst thing that he can do is to make a bad product.

JINGLE FOR PEANUT BUTTER COMMERICAL

If it's a brand about which people can say, "Well, I like that company; they make good stuff. I've had it before, so I know it's good." That's a consumer franchise -- but as a ... nothing more than a reputation, if you please. It's a fragile thing, too. It can be easily destroyed -- it can be destroyed by bad products; it can be destroyed by bad advertising. We don't want to see our clients do either.

MERROW: Ad man Robert Knoll is a teacher -- and a very effective one. Your living room is his classroom -- and he teaches that beans and beer are more than just food -- they're a whole way of life. Research shows that children, aged 5 to 12, have little awareness of the selling and profit motives of commercials. They tend to see them as truthful expressions. It's not until the age of 8 or 9 that they begin to develop a realistic understanding of TV ads. By that time, they've been TV watchers for 5 or 6 years. Other researchers say that TV is addictive, and teaches children that women are overly concerned about waxy build-up, wrinkles and underarm odor ... and they may see men as cattle ranchers, always confident executives, and experts on everything.

According to a recent study of heavy television viewers, by George Gerbner and Larry Gross of the Annenberg School of Communications in Philadelphia, if you were born before 1951, television came into your life after your formative years. So even if you are now a TV addict, it will be difficult for you to comprehend the transformations it has wrought. George Gerbner and Larry Gross say that television is a world of clarity and simplicity; plots are simple -- rewards and punishments follow quickly and logically, and authority always triumphs. They found that heavy TV viewers feel that people can't be trusted; that danger is just around the corner.

I recently covered a Congressional hearing on the effects of TV violence at which Dr. Gerbner testified. He says the incidence of violence on TV is escalating.

DR. GEORGE GERBNER

GERBNER: Nine out of every ten programs sampled contained some violence, compared to eight out of ten in 1975. The saturation of programs with violence is indicated by the rate of violent episodes -- rose to record heights of 6.2 per play; 9.5 per hour -- compared to 5.6 and 8.1 in '75, respectively.

GORE: Now, you talk about the specific effect on viewers of these

violent programs, and you speculate on what the changes in behavior and attitude are.

GERBNER: Mr. Gore, we do not speculate. We refuse to speculate. We report our findings, and try to interpret them on the basis that are warranted in the data and in the findings. The particular finding to which you refer comes from a series of questions we addressed to children and to adults about, "Can you trust people?" -- about "What are your own chances of encountering violence?" -- about "belief, credibility and a number of things indicating the amount of danger that they project onto the outside world." To each of these questions, there are two answers; one is what we call the "television answer" -- which is based on our studies of content; this is the way it is in the world of television, where people on the whole are less to be trusted; more to be feared -- where there is a high rate of victimization. Sixty percent of all characters get victimized or get involved in violence -- an incredibly higher rate than in real life.

And the other answer is more like the census might report -- more like it might be in real life, or at least it's a divergent answer if it comes to more of an attitude or opinion question. Our respondents can choose one or the other. The measures to which you refer come from the fact that the heavy viewers of television tend significantly more often to choose the television answer, thereby suggesting -- we're not asking them about television; we're asking them about real life -- thereby suggesting that their conceptions of the hazards, of the risks of the inability to trust other people in real life is significantly influenced by heavy viewing of television.

MERROW: Dr. George Gerbner testifying before the House Subcommittee on Communications.

COX: We're trying to find out if people learn anything from television. Do you?

MAN: I suspect, indirectly -- maybe something rubs off through osmosis.

WOMAN: Well, the crime that goes on, for one thing -- and there's a lot of good things, too, but it seems like crime predominates all the time. Right.

COX: It's ... you would say you learn how to be a criminal?

WOMAN: Oh, no. I wouldn't say that. I'd never learn to be a criminal!

WOMAN: I think more of in terms of what my children learn from television -- and they have learned a great deal. I think that they've learned a lot of the animal world from the Walt Disney films, and a lot

of manners from some of the programs that use proper manners -- and they see how other people get along in the world with others, and I think there's a great deal of good to television. I'm not for all the violence on TV; I think they also pick that up -- especially younger ones.

MAN: It's hard to put it into words, perhaps, but on occasion, you'll see a movie, or you'll see a program which is presented on television, which will make you stop and think about your present situation, your environment, and so on.

BLAIR: Now, right there is a beautiful lawn, and a great big, old white mansion -- which is something that, in a way, after you've spent a whole day in Reston, your unconscious is craving -- a little of the old ... there's a gazebo at the bottom of the garden, and a white fence; there's a whitewash two-story distillery, and some ... an old wall with gnarled trees behind it. These buildings were obviously here long before anybody planned a community -- and thank goodness for them!

MERROW: All environments are learning environments. The TV programs we watch are planned -- the places we live are planned. OPTIONS IN EDUCATION asked architectural critic Paul Spreiregen what we learn from a planned environment.

PAUL SPREIREGEN

SPREIREGEN: I once read a remark that education isn't taught -- it's caught. It's a matter of a lot of stimulating exposures, and these stimulating exposures -- I don't think the city or the rural area has any particular edge on them. They have to be a diversity of exposures to a growing child -- with people, with places, with ideas, with things -- I think the suburbs probably have been very limiting. For one thing, I think everyone's conscious of the generation gap, which I hope we're getting, kind of emerging from -- but I think the generation gap is one of the products of this -- it's a product of having made so many; such large extents of urban development -- all for the same type of imaginary family. So that ... they were really designed for child raising families -- and not too well, at that!

What you really need in any kind of a community is a lot of different kinds of people; not just one kind of family, but a lot of kinds of families. Grandparents and grandchildren -- those two generations -- have an enormous natural affinity, even before mankind was mankind -- and we've almost prevented it from existing ... so the elderly people are off someplace, and the kids are off going somewhere else, that's ...

TALBOT: And that happened ... why?

SPREIREGEN: Well, it happened because of the way we developed our suburbs, I think -- to some -- to a very large extent, after World War II. I

guess, all ... you know, all of that is really part of the way our society is tending -- and that is, everything is getting ... institutions are getting fewer in number, but bigger in size -- and I think that's a very, very real danger. I think it's, in fact, one of the biggest dangers we've got -- because societies ... human societies are made up of very, very many different kinds of people, and I think ...

TALBOT: Especially this one.

SPREIREGEN: Especially ours ... all of them. And, I mean, I don't mean different ethnic or cultural backgrounds -- I mean different capabilities. A society needs units of a size where people of very different kinds of talents, abilities, capabilities and interests can play some part; have something to do -- can have a participatory role; can be a part of something ... and I think that as a society narrows the opportunity for people to find themselves; to be themselves, then I think it becomes more ... people start becoming really destructive. I think there's a lot of this in the society of the modern world -- a lot of it in American society.

TALBOT: Okay. Let's talk about what designers can do to promote an alternative to that.

SPREIREGEN: Well, the designers and ... designers in any society have one ... their biggest role, I think, is a beautiful one. It's to pose possibilities that haven't been experienced. Artists do this ... I think this is really what artists generally do, whether they're composers, or painters or writers -- to call all of them artists -- is they show society not only what it is, but what it could be -- and it's an enormously important contribution. The whole business of being human beings ... being creative, seeking, finding, developing, making new forms for new circumstances; I think this is what being alive is all about for human beings.

I have a very, very close friend -- a colleague -- who, in writing me once, he said that he was delighted to find that his own concept of space; I mean, environmental space -- the space that a designer designs -- the concept of the understanding of space that he has developed for himself -- he said he was delighted to find -- is also a very modern physicist's concept of space. It's not a fixed, frozen entity -- it's an arena where many things can happen, right? And they're unlimited. Now, when you design, you design not to tell people how to live -- or should -- I mean, there's no "should" or "you have to" or "you must do this" -- that's exactly what it is not. What it is is making provision for a vast array of possibilities; that's what good design is -- it's what it always has been.

MERROW: Architectural critic Paul Spreiregen, talking with Keith Talbot. We've talked a lot in this hour about planning -- on television and in the suburbs. If you don't know what you need to learn, someone will try to sell you their plan. So, one of the most important lessons in life is figuring our what you <u>really</u> need.

Next week, OPTIONS IN EDUCATION continues its look at "learning

from Life." One thing we've learned about the suburbs is that people may move there because it reminds them of the country -- so next week, we'll go to the country. All those stories about the "good old days" -- Bossie the Cow, and living close to nature. That teaches us something. I grew up on a farm myself, and I'll tell you what it taught me. Hope you'll join us.

BLAIR: I must say one thing for Reston, Virginia. Most of these suburban places, you know your way around within 5 minutes -- but here, you can actually get lost -- and there's something to be said for that. It makes for possibilties and surprises.

MERROW: Material for this program came in part from Phil Smith, Station WEBR, Buffalo, New York and Tim Cox in Washington, D.C. Special thanks to the W.B. Donner Advertising Agency for its loan of their advertising campaign for Fairlington Village. This series, "Learning from Life", is being produced by Jo Ellyn Rackleff and Keith Talbot.

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I'm John Merrow, and this is NPR -- National Public Radio.

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

"LEARNING FROM LIFE"

PART 3

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
MR. & MRS. PETER BURNETT, Goose Creek Farm, Loudon County, Virginia	1-3
EXCERPTS from interviews with various country and western singers about their music	4-6
FRANK HAWKINS, dairy farmer	7-8
ANITA WILLIAMSON, Peach Creek, West Virginia	9
MORE WITH MR. & MRS. PETER BURNETT	10-11
JANICE DUCASSE, one-time country girl	11-12
GLADYS EMERSON, truck stop waitress, Tallahassee, Florida	12-13
MORE WITH MR. & MRS. PETER BURNETT	13-16
FANNIE BELL CHAPMAN, composer, healer, religious leader; Centerville, Mississippi	16-17
BURTON HAIR, Pastor, Trinity Gospel Assembly of God Church, Charleston, West Virginia	17
ERNEST MORGAN, Quaker counselor; Celo, North Carolina	18
MORE WITH MR. & MRS. PETER BURNETT	19-20

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"LEARNING FROM LIFE"

PART 3

MERROW: This is John Merrow, and it's OPTIONS IN EDUCATION; part 3 of our "Learning from Life" series. This week, we're out in the country. We're on Goose Creek Farm, as a matter of fact, in Loudon County, Virginia. About five feet away from me is a yearling, trying to find some grass that's just turning green. We're gonna be spending this hour with Boppy and Peter Burnett on their farm. If you're wondering why we're here, I guess we're here because of what we learned as kids about farms and animals from, you know, from Old MacDonald -- Old MacDonald had a farm, e-i-e-i-o, and on that farm he had a cow, and that's all we ever learned. So we thought we'd come out and see what farms and farmers have to teach us.

MERROW: Give us a word picture -- a verbal tour, you know, describe your farm for us.

BURNETT: Well, in a lot of ways, it's somethin' of the past, so the fields are grown up with cedar and stuff, and the soil has kind of gone downhill, and hasn't been fertilized much any more, and fences have all rotted away and fallen down. When you go riding, you have to look out for barbed wire, and old fences -- right through the woods, it looks like, but the fact it's grown up. The nice things about it are that it's not worked all over; you can get really away -- there's lots of wild-life around. Deer ... we see fox, and deer coming up on the fields, and another nice thing is that we have about a half a mile frontage on Goose Creek, so in the summertime we can go down there and jump in. There's always a chance to get away from people, or whatever you want to be away from -- except, maybe nature.

MERROW: And from where we sit now, you can't see a house.

MRS. BURNETT: You can just see the top of Mr. Warners. But he's a nice man!

MERROW: You don't mind seeing his house.

MRS. BURNETT: What's nice is seeing in the morning. Seeing the steam rise up from the creek -- that's a real nice ... on a morning ... you know, a real foggy morning, it's real beautiful; real nice -- I wish we had more windows!

BLIVEN: It seems to me that generation after generation, we go on making the same mistakes. I have a feeling that wisdom dies really with the generation, and what survives is technology.

BLAIR: That's Bruce Bliven, author and former editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC.

He's what country people would call an "old timer" -- but do we agree with what he says? This week, we're going back to the country. John's out on the farm now -- with Boppy and Peter Burnett, and during this program we'll be going to Nashville to see what country music is telling us about ourselves, and we'll visit a dairy farmer in West Virginia, some folks in rural Minnesota -- and a truck stop waitress in the panhandle of Florida.

WOMAN: I recall when I was a girl comin' up, he said, "Well, I want you to learn everything that you can about everything, because," he said, "one day when you get to be a grown young lady," he said, "you're going to have to maneuver the family," and he said, "all the education in the books is not going to help you without the experience." So this is what I done.

... Excerpt from the song, "Country Is" by Tom T. Hall ...

BLAIR: Why do people want to go back to the country? What does it mean to them? That popular song says country is knowing your neighbors -- sitting on the back porch. Actually, if you look in a dictionary, the word "country" means all kinds of things. There's "country club", "country cousin", "country dance", "country house", "country man", "country mile", "country rock", "country store" -- all these words. The ideas that are generated by some earth and sky and trees -- by people's experiences. These are the things we call "country." And it's about the past, too. For many of us, it's family, or a kind of bedrock nature. The words grope, finally, towards a state of mind, I think -- even Sigmund Freud was interested in the country. He thought that the nostalgic feeling we have often of wanting to go back to the land was a yearning to be free -- to escape the real world. Maybe our yearning for the country is a pastoral dream, of movement in our minds to a symbolic landscape that may recapture what we think we've lost. There are, of course, real people in the country, too; it <u>is</u> a real place, and perhaps there are real things to be learned there, as well. I'm not sure I agree with Bruce Bliven who says that wisdom dies with every generation. Some things do get passed down -- for instance, when you leave home and you get homesick, you long to hear the stories you heard as a child.

Durward Holmes grew up in Coosa County, Alabama. His daughter moved to the city when she grew up. Mr. Holmes and his daughter now keep in touch by tape recorded letters.

HOLMES: That little ditty was called "Sweet Bunch of Daisies" -- and it was my mother's favorite song. And it's symbolic of the time that you wanted me to talk to you about, back in Coosa County, in the early 1930's. "Sweet bunch of daisies brought from the dell, kiss me once, sweetheart -- daisies won't tell!"

Life was as simple as that. And that's why simple songs meant so much to those people at that time. They were simple -- we were simple. We

didn't know a great deal about the whole world, and cared less. We were more concerned with survival, day-to-day -- and our own individual happinesses and happiness of the family to which we belonged.

It was a bad time in many respects, but in others, it was an awfully good time. I have no desire whatsoever to see that time repeated for me.

MRS. BURNETT: It's good to come out here and, you know, just watch the horses brushing flies away.

MERROW: What's it like here at night?

MRS. BURNETT: I'm glad you asked me that. The first night ... the first week, or so, we came here, it just blew my mind! Lying in bed, you don't hear a thing but, maybe some nightbirds. Oh, I love it. Sometimes people come over, and you just ... in the winter time, do more sittin' around the fire; do a lot of sittin' around the fire, talkin'. I don't like to watch television.

MERROW: Do you listen to music?

MRS. BURNETT: Yeah. We have a nice stereo.

MERROW: What kind of music?

MRS. BURNETT: I like a lot ... I like Hank Williams, Jr. a lot, too.

MERROW: You're a country music fan?

MRS. BURNETT: Oh, some of it ... yeah. I like to sing country-western music because it's real easy; I kind of sing -- also have a bit of a twang if I want to put it in; I really enjoy that!

MERROW: I can hear it. I can hear it. Do you play an instrument?

MRS. BURNETT: Guitar.

MERROW: You play the "geetar", huh?

MRS. BURNETT: Yeah. During the summertime, it's nice, because I can either play in the silo where it echos and sounds fantastic, or play outside -- or in the barn for the horses, and they like my music.

MERROW: Do the horses like it?

MRS. BURNETT: They like it. Like, that's a ... I work at night -- a couple nights a week in a redneck bar; a very redneck bar, and I've started makin' up my own lyrics now, thank you. How about "Budweiser men, I'm lonesome again, and here I am servin' beer to these Budweiser men!" But ah ...

MERROW: Have you set that to music?

MRS. BURNETT: Yeah. Yeah.

MAN: Country music is the music of the working man. The masses of the people -- they're happy, sad, frightened, elated, confused, searching, wondering, wishing, hoping, living, loving, dying -- and all of the things that people do everywhere.

BLAIR: If you ever doubt that the country means something in this country, just look at the multi-million dollar country music industry. I made a trip to Nashville, and talked with fans, singers and historians about what country music tells us about ourselves.

LYNN: I'm Loretta Lynn.

BLAIR: Do you get recognized, and asked for your autograph everywhere?

LYNN: Everywhere I go. We thought we'd go to a movie -- me and my little niece -- and it took me 30 minutes to go 2 blocks because so many people recognized me. They'll holler "Loretta!" -- and I'll turn around, and they'll say, "wouldn't you just know -- it had to be you!"

... Excerpt from the song, "Coal Miner's Daughter" by Loretta Lynn

BLAIR: What kind of America is reflected? What kind of people and what kind of country?

MAN: If a visitor from outer space were to gain his impression of us from our country songs, I suspect he'd think we were a more rural society than we are -- that we live in a kind of 19th Century world with values of home held rather high; a longing for "good old days" -- better days of the past; a better place.

MAN: What is important is kinship; what is important is loyalty, which made the kind of backwoods life that people led tolerable.

WOMAN: It is stable, and in these times when there are so many changes going on. People are saying that it's the pace of change that is driving everybody up the wall, it boggles the mind. Things are changing. Country music remains.

WOMAN: Certain things in country music; certain phrases that really get you at gut level!

... Excerpt from "Stand By Your Man" -- sung by Tammy Wynette

BLAIR: My search is, "What is America?" as reflected in country music?

MAN: This is what I really feel; you know, the country song is very honest.

WOMAN: As far as telling it like it is, I'm not so sure. It's a totally one-sided view, especially of life between men and women. It puts us in a fantasy world -- you want the strong maverick -- "I want you for tonight, but I may be gone tomorrow" image -- there's never any indication that a man could also become as dependent on a woman for his emotional support as they want you to believe from the songs, that the women are dependent on the men.

BLAIR: Would you talk about the great theme through all country music of loneliness?

MAN: It's the music of an uprooted people -- and the uprooting began about three or four hundred years ago when rural people were, for a variety of reasons, were forced out of the lands of their birth, and out of a rather static medieval system of social relationships, thrown end to end to the English towns because of the commercial industrial revolutions. And the next uprooting, of course, was out of Great Britain and Western Europe to the United States, across 3,000 miles of ocean into a vast and lonely, terrifying environment that were of great distances and solitude, and then it didn't stop there. Then, the movement across the face of the American land -- from the southeast; the great western migration.

MAN: The glamor, I think, connected with the railroad engineer, has settled upon the truck driver. The truck driver is the last romantic job.

... Excerpt from the song, "Eighteen Wheels Humming Home Sweet Home", by Teddy Bear Red Sovine

MAN: Throughout country music, there is a theme of externalizing the blame for what has gone wrong.

WOMAN: There is usually resignation. This is how it is -- this is how it's going to be, which is a direct result of the Calvinistic teaching. They believe in predestination; what will be, will be.

MAN: A man is sinful, and is not reformable. What is at the core of country music, I think, is a dialectical opposition between a rather puritanical view of what should be, and the failings of what is -- and it sings the songs of people caught in that thing -- "I want to be good, but ...", you know, "oh, I am not good."

MAN: I turned and I tossed, but I couldn't go to sleep -- 'cause the band kept a playin' with a honky tonk beat. Honky tonk ... all night long!

BLAIR: You heard country artists Loretta Lynn, Ronnie Milsap, Mel Tillis, Hank Snow and James Talley -- as well as country music historians Dorothy Horstman, Bill McNeill, Bil C. Malone, Doug Green and Pete Peterson.

DEEJAY: Well, friends and neighbors, I see our time has all come and gone -- it's been indeed a pleasure being here today. We did, and we hope you did. We'd like to do it all over again tomorrow afternoon at 2:00 o'clock. Until then, your friend T.C. -- the old Tom Cat -- saying good-bye. May the Good Lord take a liking to you, and you know what? I hope you do live as long as you want to, and never want as long as you live. By-bye, darlin'.

MERROW: Looking out to ... roughly to the west. It looks like the beginning of the Blue Ridge Mountains -- and not a house in sight.

BURNETT: Yeah, we're lucky. We're looking across Goose Creek, which is a reservoir.

MERROW: When you ask the local people questions, are they ready -- willing to help you?

BURNETT: I think ... yeah, initially, they really ... they didn't know me very well, and one thing they did know was I didn't know anything. And I think they -- a lot of times -- didn't know where to begin, as far as educating me, and were continually surprised by all the things I didn't know. They'd start telling me, "Well, it's as simple as this ...", and I wouldn't even know the words they were using, and ... but as our relationship has grown, they've become more and more helpful. We had a lot of trouble gettin' our hogs up on to the truck, and we really got disgusted. They could just go right between

our legs and lift us off the ground, and we'd have no luck at all getting them. So we went over to Clayton Pole, and he goes, "Well, you know, they tend to back away from you. If some of them want to back a whole lot, just put a bucket over their head, and back them up the ramp." Boy ... if that didn't work like a charm!

MERROW: That's the wisdom of the country. When I was about, I guess, eight -- maybe nine -- my job was to go pick up the eggs in the morning. We had about 50 or 60 chickens -- and only one rooster, which is plenty. And that rooster used to chase me ... a territorial kind of thing -- and the Jeep would be parked out in the barnyard, and he would chase me around the Jeep. And it scared me ... I mean, I didn't know quite what to do, because it was a big rooster -- like -- about as big as yours; pretty good size.

And one day, my father said to me, "Hey, John, why don't you just turn around and kick him as hard as you can?" And, I guess I thought about that for a while, and then one of the next times he chased me, I was running around the Jeep -- he was chasing me, and I did. I just turned around, and I hauled off and kicked him as hard as I could -- like that! I still remember it very vividly -- I sent him flying. He never chased me again. It's learnin' ... learnin'.

BLAIR: Just across the Potomac River from Goose Creek Farm, Frank Hawkins runs a dairy farm. He talked with David Selvin.

SELVIN: It's almost gonna be Spring -- that's probably a pretty important time up here, isn't it?

HAWKINS: Yeah, everybody's gettin' ready to ... spring plowin', and watchin' ... they got everything ... all the cows is calfin' -- you know -- it's that time of year, and we're pretty busy. That's the busiest ... the farmer's busier now than he generally is any time of the year.

SELVIN: What kind of things do you have to get ready for?

HAWKINS: You should have had all your equipment gone over, and greased and checked, and make sure everything's workin' in good order, and ... you got to see about ... do a lot of figurin' on how much fertilizer it's gonna cost you, and how much you're gonna need, and how much it's gonna cost, and how much you're gonna plant, and ... in other words, you can ... a lot of people say, "He's an old dumb farmer" -- but you better have a head on you if you're gonna make a livin' at it. And ... you know, it's a tough game, and you can't do it all by yourself; you've got to have help, and ...

SELVIN: I guess this is a legitimate question, you know, why do you do it?

HAWKINS: Well, it's just like in the evening, I'll go back there and feed the few head of cattle that I got, and the kids will come back and help me, and we might sit there and watch the ducks go back across; they come off of the small streams and up the river, and they cross over that crossing every night, and just to hear the sounds and the crickets, and nature ... it's ... makes you appreciate you're alive. And you set and watch the deer, or a squirrel runnin' down a tree, and ... it's ... you can't explain it until you see it. Animals ... everybody calls them dumb animals, but ... they are to an extent, but not really as dumb as people think they are, and ... there's a lot of things they know that we don't know -- just like they can practically forecast their own weather.

You watch these deer, and stuff ... and these quail, and when a bad snow's comin', they know way before they come on the radio and say, "We're expecting 2 to 4 inches of snow" -- you know -- because you can't find them; if you're out huntin', you can't find them unless you know their characteristics, and they're just like you -- they're lookin' for cover. They fill up and they feed up, because they might not be able to get nothing to eat for 3 days or a week, you know, and the snow gets ... it depends on how deep the snow is, and they've got to have a built-in weather station in them, and know what to expect to survive. And if they didn't, they wouldn't be here.

BLAIR: Frank Hawkins, talking with David Selvin. Mr. Hawkins is different from Boppy and Peter Burnett. The Burnetts really work in the city -- their farm is a symbol to them. But the real country is full of real dangers -- and sometimes in the face of them, your family is all you have. Anita Williamson lives in Peach Creek, in Logan County, West Virginia. She's the wife of a coal miner, and a member of the local citizen's committee. The danger is what's called a "gob pile" -- which is refuse from strip mining, left by a coal company -- and the gob pile is actually across and blocking a stream of very cold water which is pushing against it. The water -- pushing against the burning gob pile -- could cause a very bad explosion.

Community residents in Peach Creek Hollow have organized to publicize the hazardous conditions, and to keep each other informed about the water level. Anita Williamson talked with Anita Parlow.

ANITA WILLIAMSON-Reporter

PARLOW: What do these kind of things teach your kids? Like, your kids move in here, and they have smoke coming off of the gob pile, and they partly spend time being afraid of, you know, water's coming up ... what kind of things are they learning when all this happens?

WILLIAMSON: Fear. Fear.

PARLOW: When they're learning fear, what does that mean? I mean, I know ... I don't mean it in an obvious way, but, you know, what sort of ...

WILLIAMSON: Well, I think ... well, don't you think ... I can't help but feel like it's gonna affect them. Somebody ... if it's not a complex, some kind of a hang-up. I think that's what's wrong with a lot of young people today -- they sort of came out of fear ... I don't know; I feel like when you're grown up you have to face all these things, and I think it's a shame that children have to be exposed because ... I think they should enjoy growin' up, and not have all these burdens ... because it's hard enough for an adult to handle it.

PARLOW: What kinds of things can you do, or do you do to try to deal with the fear ...

WILLIAMSON: of my children.

PARLOW: How do you deal with that?

WILLIAMSON: I try to stay calm. I try to teach them calmness; I try to let them know I'm calm -- I really am not inside, you know ... but I just tell them what we would do, and it would be all right.

PARLOW: Do they know that while you're calm outside, that you're not calm inside?

WILLIAMSON: Probably.

PARLOW: You know that? When your mother's calm outside, what she's inside? What do you think sometimes ... if you're scared about something and your mother's being calm, and if you're showing being scared and if she's showing being calm, what do you think she is inside?

CHILD: Scared.

PARLOW: Like you?

CHILD: Yeah.

PARLOW: So she's dealing with it calm?

CHILD: Yep.

PARLOW: If you're scared about something, what do you do usually?

CHILD: I usually talk about it to my mom.

PARLOW: That's pretty calm. So, see? You are calm!

... Excerpt from "Country Is", by Tom T. Hall ...

MERROW: The old ... the old barn; it's kind of a foundation, looks as if the structure is fallin' down. What happened, Peter?

BURNETT: Well, it was in pretty poor condition when we came, and there was just a bunch of hay on the floor, and some of the beams had been cut out for the construction of the house, which was formerly a milking barn, and we took more boards off to build our stable.

One night at about 3 in the morning, the winds were 50 miles an hour ... we heard a crash, and down it came!

MERROW: Is that right?

BURNETT: Yeah. It took out pieces of this tree, and just came crashing over this way. Fortunately, there were no animals out there, and ever since, we've been cuttin' up the no good wood for firewood and kindling; that kind of thing -- and the beams we've stored below the barn ... we'll find some use for, I guess.

MERROW: And down below is the old cow barn ... the dairy farm.

BURNETT: Well, the milking parlor was down there, and on the other side is a pig area.

MERROW: I was gonna say, you don't have any dairy cows -- but you do have pigs.

BURNETT: Yeah, we had pigs -- and recently slaughtered them a couple weeks ago -- had the professional butcher do it for us, and we got about 6 hams and 6 shoulders curing now.

MERROW: Was that hard to do -- send the pigs out to be slaughtered?

BURNETT: Oh, yeah. Pigs are ... most people think they're really a dirty animal, but we got really attached to them, because they're like ... they're almost as smart as dogs; I mean, some people say they're smarter. And they would come up to us when we'd call them, and they'd ... you know, rub our legs to have their backs scratched, and we'd take a stick and scratch their backs, and all that kind of stuff, and ... they got to be, oh, they averaged about 275 pounds, and they were eating about $5 or $6 a day worth of feed, and we just couldn't afford it any longer.

MERROW: When I was a kid, we had pigs ... and my brother -- one of my brothers -- raised his own pigs, and it came time to slaughter them, and he did it himself. He wanted ... he did it because his father -- our father -- had done it, or so he thought,

and so he did it, went through the whole procedure, and then the ... and he was sickened by it; I mean he was really emotionally ripped up by it, and he saw our father a few days later, and said he'd done it ... and "Why?" ... "Because you did it, pop" -- you know -- and my father said, "I never did it!"

BURNETT: You wouldn't catch me doin' that!

BLAIR: Today, Janice Ducasse lives in Philadelphia -- but she has fond memories of her time in the country. She found out that country values really are different from city values.

JANICE DUCASSE

DUCASSE: I spent time on this farm in the summers. My grandparents have a farm in Northern Canada, and animals were, you know, a part of living. You ... they gave to you ... most farm animals have to give; they give you eggs or milk, and you have to give to them, and ...

TALBOT: I want to ask you what have you learned from all that?

DUCASSE: I learned about people and animals.

TALBOT: The kids you met in Canada ... did they care about different sorts of things than the kids you knew in the New York area?

DUCASSE: Well, it was very different for them, and I knew that. School was very low-key there; it was important to them -- school. Their life on the farm was what they knew they'd be doing when they got older, and also, the women that ... the young girls that I knew ... who were my cousins, and who I played with all the time -- their need was to get married at a young age. My need was not. I can remember my first boyfriend, you might say, when I was 13 -- happened on the farm. And he was a 19 year-old farmhand, although in our terms, you would not have believed he was 19. He was very immature, and, you know, he was ... he really wanted to almost marry ... he wanted to marry me, and I tried to explain to him that I was 13, and I had to go to a lot of school yet. I had all these goals for myself, and all he had, he was a farmhand and he would have a farm. And I couldn't ... I don't think he knew, because he'd send me these letters ... to my home.

And I was 13 ... when I'd go home, I was much younger. I was more mature when I was in Canada, and then I'd go home, and I was still a kid. You know, I mean, you're just a child, and I'd get these letters that were just, you know ... bad grammar, and I'd judge him on my standards at home, which was -- he couldn't write well, he couldn't express himself very well, and he wanted all these things for me, and I didn't have anything to give. I was only 13! And I just got really angry because, you know, I was in New York, and I wasn't in Northern Canada any more, and I was ... I had different standards, maybe, of what I was going to do, and ...

TALBOT: The standards were shaped by school for you.

DUCASSE: Oh sure, because that's where you knew your friends. See, in Canada, everyone went to this one little school for their whole lives -- they stayed ... I mean, age there ... once you were, you know, 13, you could be with people 20, and there would be little difference.

BLAIR: Janice Ducasse, with memories of visits to a family farm in Canada.

... Excerpt from "Ravishing Ruby" sung by Tom T. Hall ...

BLAIR: Gladys Emerson waits on tables in a place called "Tucker's Truck Stop" just outside Tallahassee, Florida. It's a noisy place with a lot of banter between red-headed Gladys and the truckers. She talked with George Thurston. While you're listening to this interview, notice how country values have been translated into political loyalties.

GLADYS EMERSON

EMERSON: You know, I think there's a lot of people that would like to get back to the true facts of nature, but they seem to be in a cage like a squirrel, goin' around and around -- and they don't have time to find the time to do this, because once you have gotten into the city, you get into a routine or rut, where you just have something to do all the time. It's a "must" -- you must get up, you must hurry to the job, and you must make every dollar that you can to make ends meet, and if you're livin' out in the country, on a farm, most likely you grow everything you need anyway, and you don't have to hurry around -- you don't have to rush about, and you can live a leisure life because your life is free.

You can work when you want to, quit when you want to, you're at leisure, in other words -- you don't have anything pushing you, particular Maybe a quick crop of some kind will come on ... you have to gather it all of a sudden, but you don't call this pushin' like you do ... working at a public ... like we have to do today.

THURSTON: Do you think you learn ... think people who grow up on farms learn a different value system than people who grew up in cities?

EMERSON: Well, I find you don't grow to become a cream-puff -- and when I speak of a cream-puff, your mind is flexible and your body is strong -- and your way of thinking seems to be clearer, because I still contest that if you've grown up in the city, you're thrown with all kind of people and riff-raff, and out on the farm, you're thinkin' about getting things done, and getting it to the market and seein' how much money you can get out of it, what it will look like when you do get it together, and so forth -- and this way, your mind is very much cultivated on thinkin' of the better things in life, in my book.

THURSTON: Oh.

EMERSON: And I have always contested that we needed a country boy in the

White House.

THURSTON: Do you think we have one now?

EMERSON: This I know we have one, and I like his way of thinkin', because I think he's solid and sound, and got both feet on the ground.

... Excerpt from "Country Is" by Tom T. Hall ...

MERROW: Why does that guinea hen make so much noise?

MRS. BURNETT: She's neurotic. She lost her mate, and we bought these 3 other ones -- the ones with the white chests -- we bought them for her to be companions, and now she's torn between the rooster, who she's loyal to, and her own kind, which she'd like to be ... she'd like all of them to stay together all the time, and when they don't, she gets hysterical. It's awful!

MERROW: You've got about 15 chickens, and only 4 guinea hens. Do they get along well, except for that neurotic one?

MRS. BURNETT: Well, the guineas ... they chase the chickens ... they get along all right. They all sleep together.

MERROW: Do they always ... now, we're sittin' right here on the front porch ... do they ... and the hens are right up around us. Do they always wander around like this?

MRS. BURNETT: Yeah, they ... they ... it's almost like a herd of them. They make the rounds during the day, you know? Their favorite places ... there's one place where they take mud baths ... up by the barn.

MERROW: What kind of ...

MRS. BURNETT: It's just rocks. I don't know what that is. Cement.

MERROW: Cement ...

MRS. BURNETT: Um ...

MERROW: You say "cee-ment" -- where are you from?

MRS. BURNETT: From Texas.

MERROW: Is that what they say? They say "cee-ment?"

MRS. BURNETT: Yeah ... cement!

MERROW: How do you pronounce it? M-A-I-N-T-E-N-A-N-C-E.

MRS. BURNETT: Wait ... say that again?

MERROW: M-A-I-N-T-E-N-A-N-C-E.

MRS. BURNETT: Maintenance.

MERROW: Okay, now say it again.

MRS. BURNETT: Maintenance.

MERROW: I used to live in Indiana, and they pronounced it "mainTAINance."

MRS. BURNETT: Oh no ... really?

MERROW: Well, you say CEEment -- that's just as bad. I mean ...

MRS. BURNETT: Texas is an okay place -- I hated it when I left, but ... that's where I learned about animals ... on the farm. It was my grandfather.

MERROW: Do your grandparents have a farm?

MRS. BURNETT: Yeah, but we only visit in the summer. They had pigs, and chickens and goats and a couple horses. That was really ... that was the best part of my childhood. That's probably why I'm here right now, because of Hickory Hill, East Texas.

MERROW: And when you were a kid, you went there in the summers? Did you stay there all summer?

MRS. BURNETT: Yeah ... yeah. With my grandparents.

MERROW: Did you have chores?

MRS. BURNETT: I helped my grandfather feed the pigs. Lettin' the chickens out. Oh yeah, all day long. But "fun" stuff -- you didn't have to do it if you didn't want to. You wanted to ...

MERROW: But those aren't chores.

MRS. BURNETT: No ... no ... no chores. He rode the tractor, drank a lot of Dr. Pepper. Ate a lot of black-eyed peas, you know?

MERROW: That sounds like an ideal childhood!

MRS. BURNETT: I picked corn, and stuff -- but I ... privileged

childhood, you wouldn't have to do anything you didn't want to do, but you did ... you ended up doing enough to make you exhausted by 8:00 o'clock at night, and go to sleep, you know.

MERROW: Your grandparents probably knew how to handle you by not telling you you had to do it, they probably got a hell of a lot more work out of you.

MRS. BURNETT: Oh, gee ... yeah -- they were super; just super.

MERROW: Now, once of the things I notice ... looking around, is the foundation of an old barn -- and your husband told me that blew down, and what you did was you used almost all that wood, you know, stuff that was ... you couldn't use for building, you burned.

MRS. BURNETT: Right.

MERROW: It makes me think that maybe on a farm, that's a general way of life -- you don't throw anything away; you use it as many times as you can.

MRS. BURNETT: I wish ... I wish that were so, but I don't think that's true.

MERROW: Why not?

MRS. BURNETT: A lot of times ... because I've been to the dump enough times, and I see ... I see people throwing away good wood that I'd love to use for building, or I'd love to use for burning, and they're just throwing it into a big pit in the ground.

MERROW: Well, now that kind of dashes an image I had of farm folk; that they were wiser in their ways, and they didn't throw away a lot of useable stuff.

MRS. BURNETT: Most ... some of them ... some of them are, but there's a lot of ... I keep getting horrified by driving down the road and seeing country people throwing beer cans out. I mean ... they do it just as much in the country as in the city -- maybe more.

MERROW: You know, I have a feeling that you have a kind of mixed ... you have an ambivalent attitude about this farm experience. On the one hand, you've learned a lot from some of the people. You've gotten attached to the land -- but on the other hand, you aren't really part of this place. You're not a part of this community. You kind of look down on the people around you and some of their attitudes.

MRS. BURNETT: Ooh ... ooh ... that's a bad one. I guess I am a little elitist. I don't feel people appreciate what the farm could be, and they never will -- but I hate to say that I look down on anyone.

MERROW: I don't mean to say "look down" -- let me say you disapprove, though, of a lot of a certain amount of the attitudes that these people have toward their land, toward life, toward television and so on.

MRS. BURNETT: Toward other people ... yeah ... toward hunting and things like that. But I try ... I try to understand it. I don't ... I feel less sure about changing people the longer I live here. You know, you have to deal with hearing incredibly racist remarks, and you know, if you were to sit there and attack them for those racist remarks, you wouldn't have a friend in the world ... no out here ... not in Virginia.

... Excerpt from a Gospel song ...

KAISER: This is Judy Kaiser with the Center for Southern Folklore, and you're hearing Fannie Bell Chapman leading her family in song. Mrs. Chapman is a composer, a healer and a religious leader in her community of Centerville, Mississippi.

FANNIE BELL CHAPMAN

CHAPMAN: Oh, we're just a family, you know ... a family that prays together ... stays together as the Hallelujah, you know ... we always -- Hallelujah, it mean ... you know, somethin' good, you know ... singin', and some kind of a beautiful thing, you know, as "Hallelujah!" -- you know. No beautiful thing in the world, you know, than a family that loves you one another, like my children love me, and I love my children, and my grandchildren. Oh, I just love them! And if I didn't love them, I wouldn't have that many around.

And they get down some time, and the music and everything will be soundin' good ... we'll reach back, and get our speaker, and our guitar, drums and things -- and you talk about seein' your man a couple of steps ... say, "Hey! My Lord!"

... Excerpt from "Jesus on the Telephone" sung by Mrs. Chapman and her family ...

CHAPMAN: When we used to go to Clinton, Louisiana, and sing with Mr. Watsam ... what's his name? And Fannie would sing that about ...

CHILD: "Tell Old Satan ..."

CHAPMAN: Yeah.

.. Excerpt from "Tell Old Satan" by Chapman family ..

CHAPMAN: And that old sister ...

CHILD: I used to love that song.

CHAPMAN: And Reverend Watson .. all of them you know, that was just a really good time ... and my, it's still growin', and growin' bigger, and it's more important now than it was then, because in those days, we were singin', and now, we realize what we're singin' about -- you know what I mean? We were singin' then, and we were singin' because we could sing, but now, we know the meaning of why we sing, and the meaning of the singin' -- and the feelin's that goes with it ... all together.

... Excerpt from another family gospel song ...

BLAIR: Fannie Bell Chapman and her family with Judy Kaiser of the Center for Southern Folklore. The Church is a powerful symbol for both blacks and whites in the country. Keith Talbot talked to Pastor Burton Hair of the Trinity Gospel Assembly of God Church in Charleston, West Virginia.

PASTOR BURTON HAIR

HAIR: I believe that when you're younger ... as a child. In general, most young children really don't know what's going on, but there are a few that take it just as hard as an adult when death meets one of the members of the family. I know I've seen it. My grandad passed away, and I really didn't understand a lot about death, you know, and even now -- even though I preach funerals -- and have -- I've ministered 3 in the year ... in this last year I became a pastor. I can't explain it.

But since I've become a Christian, and know ... you know, and know him personally, just since I've dug in -- since I began reading God's word, and since I've been prayin' really earnestly and sincerely, then death really doesn't bother me. Not in the slightest. In other words, that's a place of safety.

TALBOT: It's a place in your mind.

HAIR: No, it actually happens ... not just in your mind and your belief. It actually takes place. I mean, your name is written in the last Book of Life, okay -- and you have the hope of tomorrow. Now, it's a faith. We believe ... you know ... faith.

... Excerpt from gospel song ...

HAIR: It's the idea that, well ... it goes ... all boils down to my belief in the verse that says, "Lay out not treasures here on earth, where moth and rust decay, where thieves break in and steal -- but lay up your treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust decay, nor thieves

break in and steal."

... Excerpt from another gospel song ...

BLAIR: Each place gives rise to its own philosophy -- its own ways of dealing with the mysteries and the problems of life and death. Death is something we try to put out of our minds most of the time -- but nature brings it home. Ernest Morgan is a Quaker counselor from Celo, North Carolina.

ERNEST MORGAN

MORGAN: I look forward to death as something ... as a desirable conclusion to life. I'm not sure of the process -- how comfortable the process may be, that's something I can't determine.

TALBOT: Why is that a depressing prospect for so many people?

MORGAN: Well, it's because people think of themselves apart from nature; apart from humanity, apart from family -- they think of themselves as something isolated. Actually, if they think of themselves ... their lives as a thread in this fabric, then the problem is, how well is it woven in? Not, when is it gonna have to stop? It's the quality of life -- it's how it fits in to all of life that's important, not the length of it.

Incidentally, all cultures that I know have death ceremonies -- even some animals. A young woman I know of had the rare privilege of witnessing an animal funeral. A badger had died, and another badger -- presumably the mate of the dead badger -- was digging the grave to bury the mate, and while this was going on, the badger community had assembled, and walked slowly in a circle around the grave, making a little moaning sound. And this girl witnessed this from behind a hedge not far away, and was quite moved by it. But ceremonies of death ... elephants have them, too, incidentally. They are universal to human society, and to some of the sensitive animal ... other animal societies.

There are only two ways to avoid grief in life. One is to die when you're young, and no one has preceeded you whom you cared for -- no one else has died first. The other way is to never love or care for anyone. Now, I prefer to accept the grief. I would not want to approach the state from grief at that cost.

TALBOT: Better to have loved and lost ...

MORGAN: Better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all. I would rather have loved and lost ... well, my family never had them.

TALBOT: It's occurred to me that every parting is sort of a rehearsal for death, in a sense.

MORGAN: I had never thought about that, but I suppose it is. I suppose

that's true. Right.

... Excerpt from the song, "Family Reunion" ...

MERROW: I guess we have to leave pretty soon. How about our toast to your farming career, and I hope ... I hope ...

MRS. BURNETT: Don't spill it on your ...

MERROW: But I know you have to leave this place in a couple of months.

BURNETT: Right.

MERROW: What kind of emotions ... how do you feel about having to leave?

BURNETT: Our lifestyle will be different next year, and then I'll be working ... doing lawyer work someplace. And Boppy will either be goin' back to school, or will have a job teaching. So we won't have as much free time to be out there with a chain saw cuttin' wood, and that kind of thing, and so we'll probably look for a place that is smaller, both in acreage and square footage in the house, and a little more compact and efficient.

MERROW: You mean this kind ... this venture -- this adventure as a farmer is ... is just about to elude you, and is proably something you aren't gonna ever recapture, except through photographs.

MRS. BURNETT: This ... wait a minute ... this wasn't an adventure of being a farmer. It really wasn't. It's just living out here and ... like I like chickens, and decided to get chickens. I wasn't saying, "I'm gonna be a chicken farmer!" It's just to watch them grow.

MERROW: That's why I call it an adventure ... I mean ...

BURNETT: Yeah ... it is.

MERROW: Not kind of a deliberate plan of studying to be a farmer and all that, but ...

BURNETT: But don't let anybody think of us as holding ourselves out as farmers, because that's a joke -- I mean, we're out here enjoying the land and being sort of country lifestyle people more than breadwinning farmers.

MERROW: In a way, you're having ... you're having the kind of year that everybody ought to have for at least a year of his or her life.

BURNETT: We'll find what now ... we have ... it's been a tremendous education, and what we're gonna do is move toward smaller, more efficient type of place. We'll do the things that we want to do. We know what to look out for ... this has sort of been a studying in farming for us.

MRS. BURNETT: And what not to do!

MERROW: Well, now, can a kid learn enough just by a field trip? For example, coming out of the suburban or city schools, and come out on a field trip to Peter and Boppy's farm for a day?

BURNETT: They'll never learn the responsibility of caring for animals in a day, somethin' like that -- that comes with just every day -- looking after an animal, and that kind of thing. The child learns to care for animals, and to care about other living things. And to me, that's really ... really important in a child's development.

MRS. BURNETT: One of our horses is gonna have a baby this Spring, and oh my gosh -- I'm lookin' forward to that! We saw a foaling last week ... it was the first time I ever saw it, and I'm really scared, but you really have to spend a lot of time with her.

BLAIR: This series on "Learning from Life" is being written and produced by Jo Ellyn Rackleff and Keith Talbot. Reports for this program came from George Thurston, Station WFSU-FM, Tallahasse, Florida; Judy Kaiser of the Center for Southern Folklore; Anita Parlow of Peach Creek, West Virginia -- and David Selvin and Keith Talbot in Washington.

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

"LEARNING FROM LIFE"

PART 4

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
BRUCE BLIVEN, former editor, The New Republic	2
Reporter JOHN YDSTIE talking with people in Strausburg and Mott, North Dakota	3-6
Reporter JAY BALTEZORE talking with people in San Francisco's Broadway district	7-9
WILLIAM BRINK, managing editor, THE NEW YORK DAILY NEWS	10
JOHN GARDNER, author	10-13
JOHN UPDIKE, author	14-15
Reporter TIM COX talking with Washington, D.C. high school students	15-16
SUSAN BERMAN, author	16-17
BOB KINGSLEY, ex-convict turned cook	18-20

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"LEARNING FROM LIFE"

PART 4

MAN: If you think of a pot of stew bubbling on the back of the stove, hour in and hour out, and day in and day out -- knowledge, it seems to me, is the various things you put into the stew; you add to it from time to time. But wisdom comes when the stew is all melded together so that the various items in it are indistinguishable from one another.

MERROW: But how do you know when the stew is ready? I'm John Merrow -- and this week, OPTIONS IN EDUCATION continues a series which asks where you learned the most important lessons about life. We often talk about school, but now we'll spend some time with a safe cracker, some artists, hustlers outside burlesque houses in San Francisco, and some people from small towns in North Dakota.

WOMAN: I find myself spending a lot more time just sitting back, trying to figure out what I am -- what I really want from life; how I fit in in relationship to the world, to the people I care about, to my friends, to my family, and things like that.

MAN: And if you go for that, you, of course, have to honestly face the ugliness -- but you face it clearly, and you don't fudge on it, and try to find the way to heroism in your own life.

WOMAN: But it may be that one shouldn't do it. One shouldn't inquire too closely into oneself, and I do say something; I have a very obscure quotation there from Isaac Dennison. It goes, "Some things inside oneself which need the dark to grow."

MAN: First, the more you know, the greater your sorrows, too.

WOMAN: All the time that we have lived here, I have wanted to leave.

MERROW: When we start looking for the answers, we often turn to people with more experience in life than we have -- people like Bruce Bliven, author and former editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC. Mr. Bliven, who is 87, believes wisdom dies with every generation. Parke Blanton asked him how one learns to deal with life.

BRUCE BLIVEN

BLIVEN: The conditions under which you were brought up, the multitudinous influences that come to bear on you -- your teachers, your friends, your family, books you read, the experiences you have in life, whatever they may be -- these things all add up finally to what your personality is. In other words, wisdom enables you to make judgments which are based on your

past, but you don't know what elements in the past came into the making of that judgment. You have imponderables. I was greatly influenced as a young man in college by Freemont Older, the wonderful old editor of the San Francisco Bulletin. I worked my way through college as a correspondent of the Bulletin. He had a tremendous influence on me as a person, and a few other people have influenced me greatly -- some of them people I've known face to face, and some of them as ... through books. I was influenced as a young man by the writings of H.G. Wells -- his early writings. I may say his later writings I thought were pretty bad ... but his outline of history fascinated me, and was a powerful influence on me.

And, of course, as editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC, I met over the many years, most of the brightest men of the English speaking world. A lot of them came to lunch at our table, as a matter of fact. They had an influence on me. Of course, everything that happens to you all your life long becomes a part of the matrix of your personality.

BLANTON: It has been more than 20 years since you retired from THE NEW REPUBLIC, and yet, you have kept learning. What are some of the influences that have kept you learning since you pulled out of that very heady atmosphere?

BLIVEN: Well, I think a journalist has a particular advantage in continuing to learn because his whole lifetime has consisted of learning; you have to learn in a great hurry, and then pass on what you've learned -- probably in a great hurry -- to other people, and pray that you've got it right. But the question comes then, who reads ... the wisdom of the ages is accumulated, of course, in books -- and if they do read them, do the books really sink in and influence them?

I have a feeling that the kind of thing that can be formalized as the wisdom of the ages out of books plays only a very small ... a very small part in our actual conduct of life. I think a very important part of the total mental picture of the uneducated person is likely to be an intuitive sense of what's going on in the minds of those around him, and this, I think, we lose as we grow older, and I think it's a great pity.

MERROW: Author Bruce Bliven talking with Parke Blanton in San Francisco. Mr. Bliven says he was greatly influenced by books -- and as a journalist, he had opportunities to express himself throughout his life. Most of us, however, are not journalists; we do not live in the center of intellectual activity. So, besides your work, what you learn about life depends a lot on the environment in which you live -- your town. Take Straussburg, North Dakota, for example -- population: 643.

> WOMAN: For me, I don't know whether it has anything so unique as any other town, excepting that I feel at home here. I've lived here now for ... since '45 ... the winter of '45, and we have our little church here; I have my friends here, and I know nearly everybody, and we have our cemetery here -- my folks are buried here; my husband is buried here. I lost a daughter a couple

years ago, and our oldest ... son has died, and he is buried here, and ... well, it's just home.

MAN: Farmers have always been that way -- optimistic people, and I guess they'd have to be if they were going to stay in business. But in about the 15, 20 years that I've been working with the farmers, I've heard them talk about 2 good years -- one about 20 years ago, and next year.

WOMAN: We're havin' our annual church fair, and in the afternoon we set up all these games for the children and the young adults. My little boy could hardly sleep last night waitin' for the carnival!

REPORTER: Really?

WOMAN: Yeah. He said, "One more night, and we wake up tomorrow ... is it the carnival?" And the first thing he said this morning was, "Is it tomorrow?"

REPORTER: IS it tomorrow yet?

WOMAN: He really did ... yes. Been waitin' for the carnival.

MERROW: That portrait of Straussburg,North Dakota was prepared by John Ydstie of Station KCCM, Moorehead, Minnesota. I don't know about you, but that town sounded just about perfect to me -- community, family, church -- everything in order; a little of the past, a simpler time. But all small towns aren't alike, and all people in them don't have the same needs. Let's visit some folks in a bigger town nearby -- Mott, North Dakota; population: 1,368.

WOMAN: All the time that we have lived here, I have wanted to leave -- thinking, "Do we have to be stuck here? Do we have to live here?" But, of course, this is where we're making our living and where we raised our children, and they all were sent off to school, and all I could think about was sending them off, and ... so they would never have to come back here and live, thinking this was almost as bad as Siberia -- you know -- and our only outside entertainment would be the TV, and maybe our ... my Study Club and our churches. And once in awhile to attend a concert at Dickenson State College or to go to Bismarck to something, and I have always wanted to live in a bigger town because I felt rather smothered here; I felt ... I felt if we could ... if I could ever leave, that's what, you know, that I would be happy ... that ... but now that the children are grown up, I don't have that feeling any more. But our children wouldn't be happy in our farming community.

MAN: It's a ... it's a travelin' community. They ... the

people ... maybe it started because someone got goin' somewhere, and ... way back, and then the next one said, "By golly, I'd like to ... I'd like to see that myself!" And they went, and they just spread. No, they're well-traveled and well educated people in this town. The more knowledge one has, the greater the chance of discussion and intellect ... use of the intellect. Of course, the more you know, the greater your sorrows, too. People in small towns nowadays are as educated as the people in the big cities. TV has brought everything into their home.

MAN: I somewhat hesitate about the nightly news on TV. I sometimes wonder if we don't get it too quick, and I suppose this is something for somebody in the news field to criticize ... news media. But I think we are too aware of things happening in the nation, and perhaps we could kind of slow down a little bit and not learn of how quick the stock market reacts to something ... we'd be a little bit better off, because people wouldn't push the panic button and get all upset. Of course, it's good that you're aware of what's going on in the country, but I think you were a lot better off if you didn't know about it right away. Maybe you had a few days lapse in there so tempers had a chance to cool, and people didn't react as quick.

WOMAN: The spirit of isolationism is going, yes -- and I think that is a good thing, because so many times in small towns you felt like, here you were -- there's this little tiny circle, and here the rest of this huge world was, and you felt completely alientated from the whole world. I know lots of times in the winter when you're driving at night, you'll see the farm lights dotting the countryside, and it's just like each farm light is its own little isolated area. People in small towns live for smaller things. Like a nice sunset. I don't know ... they just don't seem to take the time for little events that happen in a day.

MAN: If you want culture, you can see it ... you know, like on television, and it's hitting about everybody. I think they're getting away from that.

WOMAN: I think a lot of cultural education is ... is a matter of ... is the important. I mean, status-wise, should we know a lot about art and music ... and I think too much of this is a status symbol.

MAN: You'd be surprised at the culture and art that we have in this little jerkwater place. I'll say one of the things that it ... always bothers me is a lot of people think that just because you live in a small town, that you never went to college, that you have no appreciation of culture, that you don't know what's going on -- that you're

a "hick" -- and boy, this is very, very false because a tremendous number of people from this town have gone to college ... an awful lot of them. I've got a degree. I can name you ... almost all of my friends have degrees, and they are necessarily professional people -- some of them are out here farming, and they have a full four-year college degree. We have a tremendous amount of culture as far as music -- people around here are tremendously musical. I direct the choir up here, and I've got a choir that's -- as far as I'm concerned, in the Catholic Church, is out of this world.

I've noticed one thing -- that when we go out, and get in the big cities, that we're dressing exactly the same; we're up in style. Culture ... I think in culture, even ... perhaps even a bit ahead of people in the big cities, because we have to strive to get it; it isn't handed to us on a platter. So we go out of our way to get it. We work at it.

MAN: I think today we have around 83 artists. We have many local artists that go to Bismarck and enter the art shows. They have won ribbons. They have even hung ... been chosen to hang their picture in the Governor's mansion, and it just snowballed, and it's amazing of the ... that the talent they have. We'll have a farmer come into the bank, anxious to get back to his tractor, and he wants something taken care of at one of the teller's windows ... but he'll take a moment off, and with his dirty boots, trudge from painting to painting looking at each one, admiring them shortly, and when they're changed, we see that same fellow come back and do it again. And they ... it tells us that there's a latent undeveloped appreciation of art in all of us that ... that has to ... that can come out if given an opportunity.

YDSTIE: Is it a good place to grow up?

GIRL: In some ways, I think ... and in some ways, it isn't. It ... I don't know ... it seems kind of far out from the other world, and then you learn a lot more here, like ... everybody knows everybody, and you're in everybody else's business, and stuff. And in big cities it wouldn't be that way, and ...

BOY: I'd say you ... you get out, and you ... me bein' a farm boy, you learn how to ... and you see more town boys gettin' out and learnin' how to run tractors and everything, whereas you're in the city, you know, you don't really know how to do nothin'. You go to a factory and get a job, and you do one thing all ... you know ... all day.

GIRL: Everybody gets along with everybody, usually -- except that one bad problem, the gossip. And really, in a small town, anybody does anything, everybody knows about

it. Well, I got out this summer ... and I went to Aberdeen, South Dakota, and I really liked it, and I was glad that I left, and ... I don't know. I think more kids should do it to, you know ... and then come back and go to school and stuff. It's really somethin'.

MAN: I think the kids here are more open, and they're not ... they're not quite so, a little less sophisticated from where I stand, you know. They're not quite so worldly. Oh, I don't know if this is quite the right word, but it seems to me they're a little bit less cynical, too.

YDSTIE: Do you think you're getting an education that will serve you well when you get out of town?

GIRL: No ... I don't. I just ... 'cause I'm not learning, I don't think, as much here as I would, like, in Bismarck or someplace like that. No, I don't think so ... you get out of here, you don't know too much, usually.

BOY: I think ... I think the only thing you know is what you ... not what you pick up in school, but what you pick up along the line of growin' up, you know?

BOY: Yeah, I know ... find out.

MERROW: A visit with the people of Mott and Straussburg, North Dakota, prepared by John Ydstie of Station KCCM, Moorehead, Minnesota. It's interesting to note that some of the people in that small town felt television kept them informed about life. A few weeks ago, we looked into some research on television and what it teaches its viewers. Dr. George Gerbner and Dr. Larry Gross of the Annenberg School of Communications in Philadelphia say that television presents a simple world of guaranteed rewards and punishments; authority always triumphs on TV. They also found that heavy TV viewers feel that the real world is more dangerous than it really is, and that they believe that danger is lurking around every corner. Those young people in Mott, North Dakota, with their yearning to know, are one reason that many small towns have lost population over the years. The television set -- or the newspaper -- or the radio -- bring glamor and danger; the lure of the city into their living room -- and a lot of them will pack off to cities like San Francisco. Jay Baltezore visited the Tenderloin section of San Francisco -- Broadway -- and asked people there what and how they've learned from life.

MAN: I just mostly watch people, you know? I get a kick out of some of the things I see.

BALTEZORE: Yeah. What do you see?

MAN: Well ... prostitution, etcetera ... all sorts of things, you know ... tourists. Some of them gettin' ripped

off, you know, and so on and so forth.

BALTEZORE: Yeah. What do you learn in a place like this, around here?

MAN: Oh, you learn mostly to mind your own business, you know ... and let other people go ahead and do what they do, and you know, you try to take care of yourself.

BALTEZORE: What things are important to you?

MAN: Well, to me, the thing in life that's most important is somebody to share it with -- somebody to love that will love you in return.

BALTEZORE: Yeah. Okay. What about this particular job as a barker? What ... what things do you learn in terms of talking with people and dealing with this kind of ... this kind of life?

MAN: A lot of things about people's behaviors ... their reactions toward certain things in life, their fantasies, their perversions ... many things.

BALTEZORE: Do you think people can really get an education on Broadway here?

MAN: Uh ... they learn a few things about life. You'd be surprised.

BALTEZORE: Okay. Does this kind of work satisfy you?

MAN: In a way ... it makes a living.

BALTEZORE: Is that the most important thing to you?

MAN: Right.

BALTEZORE: Yeah?

MAN: Is it to you?

MAN: You guys lookin' for a show tonight?

BALTEZORE: Is what you're doing satisfying to you?

MAN: No ... not this.

BALTEZORE: What kinds of things do you learn here?

MAN: I guess ... all relative to phenomenalogical fields of reference. One moment please. Want a free peak on the inside? Uh ... I would say orange dusts of sunsets splashed in stratas,

set across nimbo blue skies where rainbow falls, prayer-book cross, Golden Gate Park ... when it gets depressing, consider the fact that at times, a cup of tea is more to me than 2 bouquets of gypsy love. Remember love and understanding ... always be honest ... get out of here quick.

BALTEZORE: You run into a lot of different kinds of people.

MAN: Every type of person there is in the world.

BALTEZORE: Uh huh?

MAN: Yeah.

BALTEZORE: Yeah.

MAN: I guess you can learn from that.

BALTEZORE: Yeah. Do you feel you're satisfied with the kind of work you do?

MAN: It's a job. It pays the rent.

BALTEZORE: Yeah. Does anything particularly influence you in terms of writing or reading, or that kind of thing? Are you influenced by people or books or that kind of thing at all?

MAN: Yeah. I particularly like HUSTLER Magazine.

BALTEZORE: Why do you do this kind of thing?

MAN: It's easy.

BALTEZORE: Yeah?

MAN: It comes natural to me. I've been involved in show business one way or another, just about all my life, so it's easy for me to stand in front of a bunch of people and holler.

BALTEZORE: Do you like this kind of work?

MAN: Not especially.

BALTEZORE: Yeah.

MAN: You know ... like I said before, it's just a job, you know.

BALTEZORE: Well, what kind of things have you learned working here?

MAN: You mean, through Broadway itself?

BALTEZORE: Yeah.

MAN: Uh ... not too much; a lot of the wrong things, so that way, you know, you eliminate a lot of those things from your itinerary, you know. As far as a learning experience goes, I guess just eliminating a lot of the illusions, you know? Getting more into the realities of what everything is.

BALTEZORE: What kind of things are important to you in life?

MAN: Important to me in life? Money! Financial success ... that's all.

BALTEZORE: Did you gain that working here?

MAN: No. No, no, no ... but I feel like now, if I ... once I do ... if I do achieve any ... you know, level of success, that I'll be able to hold it much better, you know what I mean? Like I'm more aware of the games that can be played on you to lose your money, or whatever you've got, you know? So, from that respect, I'm a lot more aware, you know.

BALTEZORE: Do you enjoy this kind of work?

MAN: Oh yeah ... oh yeah. You have to to do it right, because you have to transmit the right kind of energy, you know. If you don't do that, you'll lose, and you're not making any money; you're not doing any business. So it is important to enjoy it, sure.

BALTEZORE: Has anything influenced you, in terms of what you do? Any ... any particular people or books or writings -- that kind of thing? Are you influenced by that kind of stuff in either the work you do or the kind of life you lead?

MAN: Uh ... not too much. I'd read a lot of Marshall McLuhan, that helped a lot ... you know, gives you a better understanding of what you're doing, so you can rise above it, and analyze it from an observer's standpoint, as well as being a participant, you know? But basically, you just do it, and then you learn it, you know, like that -- it's just a learning experience in itself.

MERROW: Jay Baltezore on Broadway in San Francisco. But cities are more than the Tenderloin district -- though you might not know it from reading the headlines of big city newspapers. Headlines sell papers -- and headlines about crime and sex sell more papers.

... Excerpt from the song, "Good News Week", by Hedgehoppers Anonymous ...

WILLIAM BRINK

TALBOT: William Brink, you're the managing editor of the country's largest selling daily newspaper. Is it the front page you designed to sell the paper?

BRINK: Yes ... certainly. Well, I would say ... let me amend that a little bit. It's designed for that, and it's designed to inform, as well. I mean, the first edition is kind of a street edition -- it sells on the street -- and we tend to have what is considered a "grabbier" headline, if you will, and maybe even a grabbier picture. The very picture we have today of this hostage in Indianapolis is considered that kind of picture -- but there are days when we might have, you know .. that some model has been raped and killed or something like that ... in a first edition, and then we might switch later to a more substantive kind of story in our later editions.

TALBOT: People on the train each morning who are reading THE DAILY NEWS ... what are they getting? What can they do with the information that's in THE DAILY NEWS? How can they use it?

BRINK: Well, I think that we're very conscious ... I think every newspaper is ... with the fact that coping with life today can be quite difficult, so if we can help them in any way, we try to do that. If we ... we may run ...

TALBOT: Astrology columns?

BRINK: Well, that's a ... that's a little gossip -- a little bit of rudimentary. Gossip, is more entertaining, I think.

TALBOT: The rape and the murder on the front page?

BRINK: Yes, but that has a ... that has some value, in a sense that if it ... if it warns people to be careful in the street, you serve them a ... you serve a purpose. Everything has a ... you know, has some usefulness to it. I think any good newsman has a feeling for what the public wants and likes, and that's what we try to supply.

... Excerpt from the song, "Good News Week", by Hedgehoppers Anonymous ...

MERROW: Keith Talbot with William Brink, managing editor of THE NEW YORK DAILY NEWS. Sometimes headlines make it sound like all bad news -- but if you turn to page 61 or so, you might find a review of a concert, a dance or a novel. These artistic creations are also part of the city, and not as likely to be found in a small town. Susan Stamberg talked with novelist John Gardner about his new book, "October Light", and about the role of the artist in all our lives.

JOHN GARDNER

GARDNER: This is a period in history when, you know, Yates said, "The best lack all conviction, while the worst are filled with passionate intensity." You look at serious artists, and they're whining; they're

cynics about the world ... sometimes slip into fashionable mildism, and so on. All this stuff ... that's what I mean; mean-spirited, small-spirited, distrust of neighbors. William Gadis' big novel, JERRY R, should have been a major work of art, because he's a brilliant ... he's a genius. But he's spiteful and distrustful, and so he has "bad guy" characters, and it's not a novel any more -- it's just a kind of track against the things that he dislikes.

STAMBERG: But then you're talking about a man or a writer or creator's place in the world ... kind of the universe; I mean, it takes a mean man to write a mean book, kind of, and it takes somebody who's ...

GARDNER: You know, but you change. You know, sometimes you're meaner than other times. I don't think Gadis' first book was mean. And I think people ... people just get in funny moods with something ... or they ... or some kind of thing gets hooked on your mind; you suddenly ... Gadis hates radio -- in that book -- in JERRY R, and television and education and all kinds of things, and he just starts grinding away at ... and he never looks up from his grindstone to think, "Wait a minute ... this is only part of the ..." -- and so the result is a kind of mean-spirited book, I think. But it is true, that an artist has got to stand back; you know, the whole technique of fiction is a technique which teaches you to stand back and look at everything fairly. And if you do that, then you create art. If you forget, or if your technique tricks you because you get carried away with how funny this is or something like that, then you end up writing "non-art" ... junk.

STAMBERG: But you're talking about a kind of moral balast or a barometer that you really need to keep in flex all the time, and ... and I would think that'd be very hard to maintain because writing itself is such a private act. I would think that you'd almost have to retreat from the world and just live for a long time inside your own universe.

GARDNER: That's true. You certainly do have to retreat from the world when you're writing -- at least to some extent. Either you do it ... you know ... you can go to a party, and you can retreat from the world, and you can sort of smile sociably, and you can say "Hmm" at all the right times, you know, but you're still thinking about that chapter.

STAMBERG: You're not there.

GARDNER: Right. Or, you can do as I've done, which is just literally retreat into the woods and work when you're, you know, having trouble getting a novel to come off.

STAMBERG: Yeah.

GARDNER: But it is true that some writers have a much more public message than others, and like, I am very much concerned about what's happening in all the arts. I think that music is being taken for a ride by guys like Boulez, and I want to say that -- guys like Jacob Druckman are doing theatre as music in Boston, where you have half-naked ladies and electronic equipment, and all this kind of stuff, and people go and they think that's art. I think somebody should stand up and say, "Hey

look, guys ... look, guys, the Emporer hasn't any clothes!"

STAMBERG: Yeah.

GARDNER: And I think that's happening in fiction, too. And since I feel very strongly that society is built by myth, that the artists are the people ... you know, Shelley said it, Homer said it -- everybody said it -- but if the artists can create a vision of the future which is affirmative, and not lie to get it, then they can make a good future -- if they say the world is crap, and they keep saying it convincingly, the world turns to crap!

STAMBERG: Doesn't it get increasingly harder, though, to do it?

GARDNER: No ... no, it's not. People are still decent. There are all kinds of hopeful signs in the world. Just think about all the kids you know between the age of 2 and 20 -- and obviously, that's not a world of junk, and those are serious human beings with sensitive emotions and wishes for the future and so on. So, when cynical old men start talking about, you know, like, for instance, James Wright, who's a good poet, writes: "America, you're dead ... you were the only country I had!" That's not true! America's not dead. America's maybe a little sick here and there, but America's also, you know, very positive in many ways, and I think that the artists are the people who have to seize on that; they can't keep staring at the abyss, you know, and celebrating shoals and volcanoes -- they have to start Jean Paul Sartre has this wonderful image -- casting nets into the future, you know ... pull back ... pull to us, you know, something.

STAMBERG: Uh huh.

GARDNER: And I think books make heroes -- that's what this book, October Light, of mine, is about. When Sally reads this trashy paperback novel which celebrates violence and all this kind of stuff, partly, she's stablilized by it and strengthened by it, because it's mean and tough, and partly, it corrupts her a little bit. Art always does that, I think, and that's, you know ... we all have myths. And, just as we can have myths of patriotism ... we want our children to be just like George Washington, when George Washington wasn't, in fact, the way we want him to be -- or Abraham Lincoln, you know, who didn't free all the slaves -- only the ones that would help him with the war, and he didn't free the slaves in Texas, for instance, because Texas was on our side. We got to get the myths right -- and art has to get the myths right, and that's, you know ... so that's what I do in my book.

STAMBERG: How do you read ... how do you read?

GARDNER: How do I read?

STAMBERG: This is such a funny question.

GARDNER: I start on my left and I go to the right!

STAMBERG: What does a work of art have to have to keep bringing you

back to it over and over and over again, or a new, you know, a classic ... okay, answer it for the classic, but also for something new that ...

GARDNER: Sure. The first thing that, for me, a work of art has to have -- and not everybody would agree with this; Bill Gadis, for instance, William H. Gadis would not agree with it, and he's a very important writer -- the first thing for me, it has to start a dream in your mind. You read the first few pages, and you fall through the print on the page and you're in rush hour, and you're watching a train go by.

STAMBURG: That's exactly what happens here ... page 1½ in October Light -- exactly what happens.

GARDNER: Right. That's what I want.

STAMBURG: I knew those people ... I could almost smell them ... that early on. What a gift that is ... what a gift!

GARDNER: It's not really a gift. It's deciding you're not going for something else -- if you decide that you're gonna write elegantly, and the language is gonna keep, you know, calling attention to itself, as John Barth does -- not that it's always elegant "pretty" -- but it's interesting language, and Bill Gadis and other people.

Then the reader is always going back to the page, and so the dream doesn't become powerful -- the sense of language becomes powerful. I ... I don't like that.

STAMBURG: Do you have to say that deliberately to yourself, "Keep it simple" -- do you find fancy phrases coming in that you're having to edit?

GARDNER: No ... I don't want ... I don't have to do that, because I know so clearly what I want, which is, I want that dream! I just want the reader to fall into a dream and wake up when the novel closes. So that's what I go for in fiction. Like, I never wake up in "Gulliver's Travels" -- I mean, I just start, and I'm in the dream all the way through. Same thing with Shakespeare and Chaucer, and so on.

Another thing that I think is really important is that it's got to be affirmative. I think that ... I give you Samuel Becket, I grant you, you know, he's a genius, and everybody reads him and it's fun -- but I think that we read him because we don't really believe him, and it's very funny to think that way, you know, that the world is hopeless and ugly, and so on. But basically, I think what the arts are supposed to do -- and many, many people disagree with me about this, and they have a right to their opinion -- I think that the arts are a means of discovery, a means of moral discovery. Every church is good in that it gives you a code which tells you how to live and how to be healthy --but it excludes somebody. The thing that the arts do -- the arts never tell you, "Jews are good, but Christians are bad" -- or -- "Protestants are good, but Catholics are bad" -- or -- "Hindus are good but Buddhists are bad", or whatever. It seems to me that the arts are always going for the rules that make every individual in every society healthy, and the rules that make individuals in society

unhealthy, and if you go for that, you ... you, of course, have to honestly face the ugliness. You have to honestly face the fact that any single rule may be health-giving, or, you know, destructive. But you face it clearly, and you don't fudge on it, and try to find the way to heroism in your own life.

MERROW: Novelist John Gardner talking with Susan Stamberg. One way to keep track of what you've learned about life is to express yourself. Write down the lessons you learn, and share them with others -- or dance, or paint. But the vast majority of us are not artists, so how do we make sense of our own experience, and how do we communicate ourselves to others?

Well, if you can afford it, you can get in touch with yourself in a number of ways -- EST, Transcendental Meditation, phychotherapy. Latest estimates indicate that approximately 2.3% of all of us -- about 5 million people -- are in some kind of therapy. But most of us aren't doing that, either. School teaches most of us to read and write, and a little bit about history and politics. It also teaches us about rules and order -- but the rest is up to us. And there's a danger that after working for 40 years or so, we may not have 40 years of experience -- but only one year's experience repeated 40 times.

One thing some of us do is read books -- the experiences of others.

UPDIKE: What is this act of reading? Why do we resist it?

MERROW: Novelist John Updike addressing an audience here in Washington recently.

JOHN UPDIKE

UPDIKE: Reading is such hard work, that rebellion against it is always smoldering. An estimated two-fifths of mankind are illiterate right now. No -- being literate, it surprises us to realize, has little to do with being human. Marshall McLuhan claims that on the contrary, it has a lot to do with being less human -- or at least less integrated. He cites the report of a missionary doctor in Kenya on the disturbing effects of literacy upon the human qualities of the African.

I'm quoting ... "The high qualities of the African untouched by missions or education impress nearly everyone. Those of this district are good workers, cheerful, uncomplaining, unaffected by monotony or discomforts, honest and usually, remarkably truthful. The uneducated African ...", the doctor goes on, "is incapable of filling any skilled posts. At the most, he can be trained to carry out work that requires no reasoning. That is the penalty paid for his good qualities. A stiffer penalty, I might remark in passing, than the tone of the description implies. Even a touch of book-learning changes this African's nervous system. This different mentality may show itself in a shirking of work, trouble over food, or in the desire to have his wife living with him, however difficult for the employer.

"The reasons are clear. The African's whole capacity for interest, pleasure and pain are immensely increased through even a little education. Monotony has become a trial to him, as it is to the normal European. It takes greater will-power for him to be faithful to uninteresting work, and lack of interest brings fatigue. Among the untouched African's virtues is noted as his capacity to bear monotony, and such a capacity is indeed valuable to consumers of the electronic media. On the radio, the same Top 40 songs are often repetitive within themselves to the point of incantation, are rechurned around the clock. On television, the fight for high ratings leads to imitation of the proven and repetition of the safe -- a few weary formulas run through a scripting machine as mechanical as canned laughter.

"As a massage, television is triumphant. There is even a domestic syndrome called 'media dependence.' In a recent British study, 184 families were paid to stop watching the telly for one year. The deprivation caused so much anxiety that no family lasted more than 5 months. Television has enlisted itself among the chronic needs -- with food and sleep and a bath. Unlike love or a job, it has exempted itself from the linear responsibility to get better or worse; to go somewhere -- to be there every day is enough.

"It has the regressiveness, the circularity of our animal rhythms and, in the fuzzy quicksilver of its transitory passage across the hours of the day, it shares our mortality. The very mechanics of its tube forfeit that fixity we associate with art. Television is all process, as books are all product. Our intuition of television -- that it is amorphous and semi-fluid -- is reflected in popular phraseology from the commonly pitted complaint that it is making mush of our brains, to the wonderful metaphor, 'chewing gum for the eyes.'

"Whatever is formless tends to take a circular form. When I asked the 10 year old I live with which meant more to him -- television or books -- he said, "Books, because television is all reruns!" He added, Perhaps to be helpful to this evening's lecturer -- "books are <u>never</u> reruns."

MERROW: Novelist John Updike addressing an audience here in Washington recently. Incidentally, Updike says that 90% of Americans never buy or read a hardback book. Reporter Tim Cox found out where some students are learning about life.

GIRL: My grandmother was a harpist, and I remember going to sleep every night staying with her, listening to the harp, or the piano or singing. I used to go around and give concerts with her with my sister -- and music is still one of the most important parts of my life.

I'm sure anything that happens to a child in the first 6 years follows him the rest of his life; any interests, any self-image, any negative or positive self-image, attitudes toward life -- that's why I mentioned my grandmother as the most important education experience.

COX: What kind of learning have you done from a inward looking, into yourself?

GIRL: Well, when I was 20, I traveled around the world, which is probably the most important educational experience I've ever had. It reversed my way of thinking in almost every way, and it took me several years. I went back to college after that, and could not sit in classes and listen to people talk out of books any more, because I had a lot of thinking to do, and I couldn't sit in class any more and call that education.

BOY: Umm ... when thinking about learning, outside of academics, a trip that I took that was hitchiking around the western United States comes to mind where, during that time, I was hitchiking alone and spent a lot of time alone on the sides of roads, and sleeping on the sides of roads , and things like that. What comes to mind is just the loneliness that I felt then, and how much I hated that, and how I wanted to get to people's houses that I knew, how I wanted to fill up that loneliness with things, and in thinking about that, feeling that I experience still now in different ways less intensely, I think of the ways that I try to fill that up -- being -- thinking about wanting to be married, wanting to fill it up with friends, with doing things, with drinking, with getting high, with reading, just feeling lonely, and immediately going to fill that gap with something.

I'm thinking that ... something I learned from that is just to endure that loneliness and see what's going on in that time ... is a valuable learning experience.

COX: In this country now, we find a turning inwards where you have Transcendental Meditation going around, and EST, and these other various things -- do you find a significant part of your learning comes from self-awareness in this area?

GIRL: Now, more than previously ... definitely. I find myself spending a lot more time just sitting back trying to figure out what I am, what I really want from life, how I fit in in relationship to the world, to the people I care about, to my friends, to my family, and things like that.

MERROW: Reporter Tim Cox talking with students about where they are learning. Susan Berman has reached some conclusions about life, and about her ability to control what will happen tomorrow. She talked with Rosemary Tobin in San Francisco.

SUSAN BERMAN

BERMAN: I think I've learned that you can't control it -- I think that's the major lesson of life. I think through all my jobs in journalism, the newspapers, the television station, the books I've written, through 5

years of analysis, I think the basic thing I've learned is that you can't control your future -- you can certainly do everything to insure that your life will go in one direction or another, and you can reflect on your choices -- you can give them your all, but that there's just ... fortune plays an incredible part in anyone's life, I think.

TOBIN: You received a lot of letters when your book, "Driver, Give a Soldier a Lift", was published -- letters from women saying, "You've written the story of my life, and I am so glad to read it and I'm so glad you lived that life, and now I've learned from it." Was there any book that you read that gave you the same experience? Any ... any one book that you read that you said, "That's it! That's ... that means so much to me."

BERMAN: No, and I've always been looking for just that very book. Even my own book, now, to me, that was ... you know, my life at 25, really, you know, in emotional growth. I was actually 28 at the time it happened, but I'm a little bit slow ... so now I'm 31, and I look around and I find things that I can tangentially relate to; a certain ... like "Fear of "Flying .. I loved very, very much, but I'm really -- I'm not from New York; I'm not intellectual in that way -- I'm not psychoanalytic-wise, I'm not trendy, I'm not ... I mean, there are a million things that I am not; I am not the urban survivor, so I couldn't really relate to that book. On an inward level, I related, you know, very well to Anaïs Nin's diaries -- I loved them very much. Now, I'm reading "Speedboat" -- as I said, by Ranard Adler, and I can certainly see a lot of, you know, very meaningful things to me in that book.

One paragraph she has in that book which I think is so brilliant, really -- she has a book on what kind of ... here's a paragraph on ... well, you know, to bastardize it, to ... would be to say, "What is the point of it all?" But she makes the point that the point of life is always changing, and this is so true, and I was never able to verbalize it before. She says, "Sometimes the point is the goal. Sometimes the point is to be right or kind. Sometimes the point is human relationships. Sometimes the point is warmth." That kind of thing ... I mean, I find things in books that I can relate to in part as no one has written the story of my life, and I don't think it's possible that anyone could write the story of my life; I don't think it's possible that anyone could write the story of any other individual's life; I think we're all so unique and wonderful in our own way that it's unrealistic for me to try to find a total role model.

At one time I thought that I could, and I've never been able, really, to find one -- I don't fit into any of the categories, in a way. I'm not the hard-lined feminist, you know, journalist -- I'm not the ballsy, gutsy, Sally Quinn gossipy type; I'm not, I mean ... I'm not many things, and I am Susan Berman. It's harder being me, but, you know, it's the only way it could possibly be.

MERROW: Writer Susan Berman talking with Rosemary Tobin in San Francisco. She mentioned something that Shakespeare said long ago; that people can set events in motion, but cannot predict with any certainty how they'll turn out. But if we cannot control tomorrow, we can at least attempt to understand yesterday. That way, we make choices about what we want to do --

and be -- in the future. Bob Kingsley has made some choices about his life. He's a good teacher, and a good student -- and he understands what motivates people to learn things. Kingsley served 8 of the last 16 years in prison -- for safecracking. Now he's a cook in a private school.

BOB KINGSLEY

KINGSLEY: I hadn't any prior knowledge that people even opened safes; I didn't know, I mean, all I thought the only way to get into a safe was a ... through the combination, and what I ... what I had done in order to get into the penitentiary was that I had just kicked in the door in a couple of establishments, and just grabbed the cash register, and ran -- you know. But once you get in the penitentiary, they explain to you that your methods aren't too sophisticated and there's a lot better ways to do things than the way you did it.

And there's always somebody readily available to teach you, to explain to you that ... in all aspects, by the way; I mean, there's somebody that's gonna teach you how to open a safe, or there'll be somebody that'll teach you how to forge a check, or they'll be ... and there's also people that'll teach you how to write a writ ... if you get into the penitentiary and you need a little jailhouse lawyer there, and you can become that, too. Everything ... many, many courses in the penitentiary that you can pick up.

SIEMERING: You started with grain elevators, for practice, like?

KINGSLEY: That's exactly it ... this ... they're mostly in a kind of an isolated area; you're not really bothered, you can make a little bit of noise, and ... so it made a good ... a real good training ground, and we'd go into a grain elevator and ... nobody around, that big building, you could pound away, or make all the mistakes you wanted ... a lot of times ... after I, you know, I had demonstrated certain techniques -- like any novice, you just say, "Here's the tools" -- and you go ahead. ,And I failed a lot of times, you know ... I made a lot of errors, and ... take me a lot of time, and he'd keep impressing that on me, you know, that time was the essence, and you have to develop speed. I sound like I was in a typing pool or something, but he'd say, "Hey" -- you know -- "speed is the essence, and you got to be able to ... don't waste any motion" -- and, eventually, you know, after a few trials and errors, things came about, and I suppose that's in just about any profession, if you want to call this a profession.

I don't think I've ever spoken to a safecracker that said he didn't enjoy it; he didn't like it -- it wasn't -- you know, he was doing something that he thought was good. He liked doing what he was doing. Most of us kind of feel that we're in a hierarchy, too, here ... you're not just a "rip and tear burglar" -- you're going in there specifically to do a specific thing, and we take pride in the fact, too, that it's not an armed robbery. Anybody, you know ... anybody can take a gun and walk in and take some money away from a person -- but not anybody can walk into a

place at night, and open a safe, and achieve what he set out to do -- particularly in that thing ... most of us have, you know, we take a lot of pride in our so-called "profession." I think we used... we used virtually everything there was, from just a plain old screwdriver and a sledge hammer to nitroglycerin, and ... learnin' these things that ... I was in possession of some knowledge that other people didn't have, and I don't know ... sometimes I felt like a skilled surgeon, or something.

I remember being questioned by the FBI at one time, and they told me that I was down on their records as one of the best safecrackers in North Dakota, which I don't know if ... means a lot. I mean, if they'd have said New York City or something, maybe ... but I was impressed! I liked it, and I said, "Hey ... man! I just got my Bachelor of Arts from ... in safecracking" or something ... but I liked it, and when I ... we were ... we had burglarized a bank, and was apprehended, and I was sent; eventually sent to the federal pentitentiary. One of the reasons we were caught was because the Crime Bureau in the state of North Dakota had pictures of me and my partner, and we were the only two people -- out of 600,000 people in the population of North Dakota -- that were down in the Crime Bureau as people who were capable enough of opening this type of safe, and some ... you know, some safes are supposedly more challenging than others, and we could open them all! And I liked it ... I liked ... there was a ...

And I like it now, you know? I like to be able to think that I did those. I don't believe I'd ... I don't believe I'd ever have to resort to that type of thing again, but I ... it's ... it'd be a damn lie if I said that, you know, that it wasn't a gas ... it was a ... I achieved, or I received more from it than just the money.

SIEMERING: You began looking at safes for the money inside, and you ended by looking at the safe as a challenge.

KINGSLEY: That's true ... it certainly is.

SIEMERING: How did you shift from the interest in the money to the interest in the process of getting inside?

KINGSLEY: Well, I guess ... like I said, one of the ... after you've gotten so much money, and there's just absolutely nothing you can do with it. You can own so many cars and have so many suits and have so many apartments, and ... your money becomes just a pile of paper after awhile, because you can't spend it -- you can't buy property with it. The Internal Revenue is gonna start asking questions. You can't put it in the bank. There's just very little you can do with an accumulation of money, and so, your perspective shifts a little bit, you know? Now, it's no longer the money ...

I don't really ... wait a minute ... now, I don't really know if that's true at all. Maybe it always was just the challenge of getting into this thing. I think maybe in the beginning, I convinced myself that it was the money I was after, and I was -- that was a motivating factor

to start out with -- I did want some money, but I even ... I think that the first one that I opened by myself was like discovering sex. I said, "My God -- this is something I did all by myself!" You know ... after this little training period that I went through, I remember my partner and I ... when I opened this one all by myself, I just kicked it over -- it was a simple little affair, and I kicked it over and over and punched out the door, and opened it up -- and I handed him the money. We both kind of jumped with glee, you know, "God damn!" he said, "You did it all by yourself!" And I just couldn't believe it ... and I ... it was a real high ... a real high, saying, "Hey, I did this by myself" -- and we went out and celebrated, you know?

We got back to Fargo, and my partner's wife said, "Well, how did he do?" And he said, "He did it all by himself" -- and she threw her arms around me and give me a big kiss ... "My! You did it all by ..." I don't understand this-- it's just wierd, now that I think back on it, but it was like graduating from high school or something, you know, "Hey, you achieved something, all by yourself!"

MERROW: Convict turned cook, Bill Kingsley, talking with Bill Siemering of KCCM, Moorehead, Minnesota -- with some lessons for all of us. Maybe not so much about what we learn, but why we learn -- out of necessity, out of a need for recognition, achievement, pride, identity. The important thing we're learning from this series is that once you think you know all the answers, you're dead!

MAN: I think that the arts are a means of discovery -- a means of moral discovery. The arts never tell you "Jews are good, but Christians are bad" or "Protestants are good but Catholics are bad" or "Hindus are good, but Buddhists are bad" -- or whatever. It seems to me that the arts are always going for the rules that make every individual in every society healthy. And if you go for that, you ... you ... of course, have to honestly face the ugliness -- but you face it clearly and you don't fudge on it, and try to find the way to heroism in your own life.

WOMAN: But it may be that one shouldn't ... one shouldn't inquire too closely into oneself, and I do say something; I have a very obscure quotation there from Isaac Dennison. It goes, "Some things inside oneself which need the dark to grow."

MAN: Of course, the more you know, the greater your sorrows, too.

WOMAN: I find myself spending a lot more time just sitting back, trying to figure out what I am -- what I really want from life; how I fit in in relationship to the world, to the people I care about, to my friends, to my family -- and things like that.

MERROW: You might think that this program -- OPTIONS IN EDUCATION -- is

just about school -- and it usually is, but if you're a teacher or a parent, you can take this program to school, and bring a little life into the classroom.

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I'm John Merrow, and this is NPR ... National Public Radio.